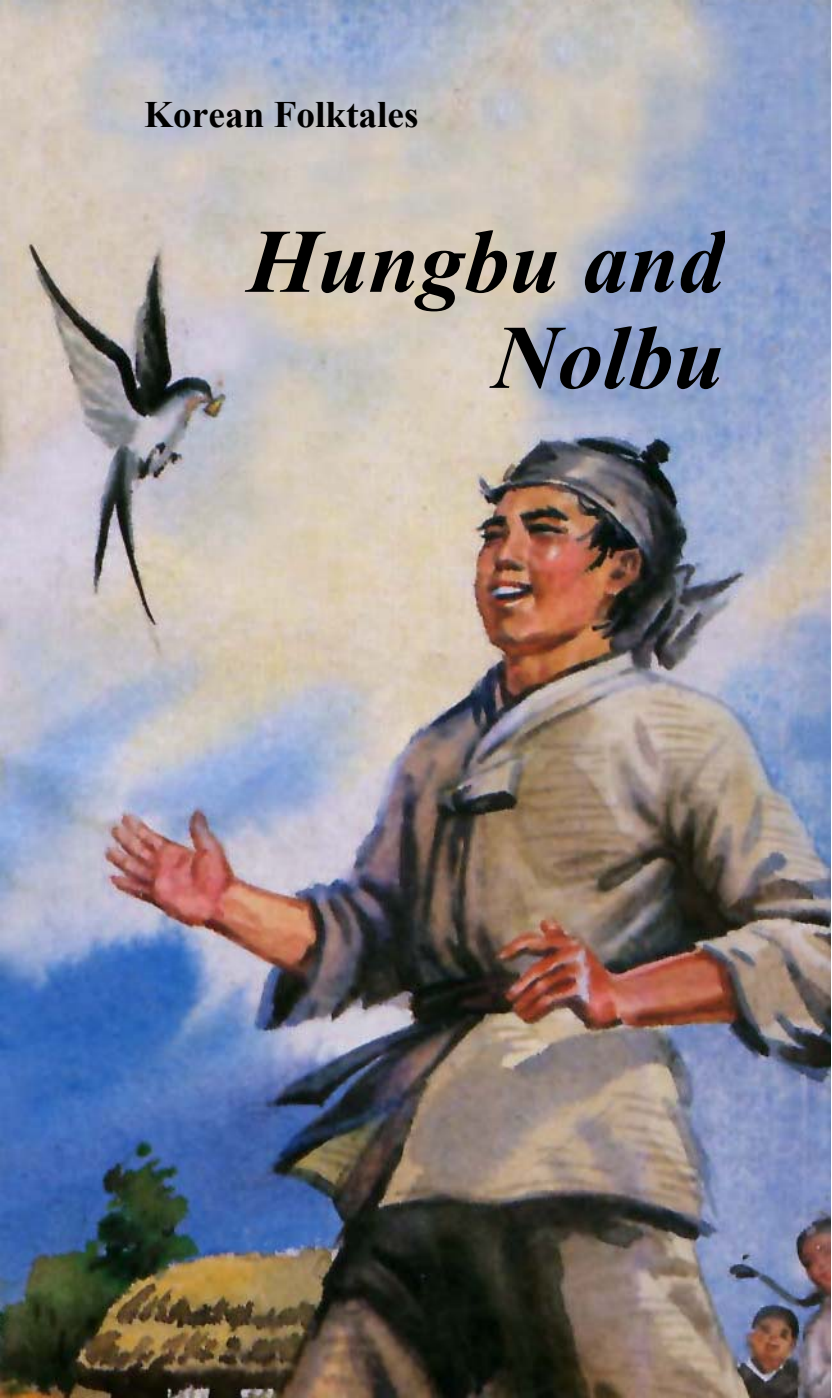
Korean Folktales

Hungbu and Nolbu



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Collected by Ho Won Gil

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Introduction

The respected leader President Kim Il Sung said:

"Our people boast a 5,000-year long history, and they are a resourceful people with a brilliant culture."

Many folk stories are told by the people of Korea, which has a history of 5,000 years and brilliant culture.

This book contains a collection of instructive and interesting folk stories.

From olden times people respected virtue and justice and hated evil and injustice. In most Korean folk stories honest people endure many hardships and come to lead a happy life, while the bad are punished.

Typical of them is the story, "Hungbu and Nolbu", which is the title of this book.

In addition to "Hungbu and Nolbu", this book includes the story of a mountain shrine and of a cat wearing a hemp hood, as well as other stories about honest people and the punishment and reprimanding of evil doers.

The book contains many fairy tales about monkeys, goats, hares, cats, tigers, foxes and other animals likened to people from different backgrounds, which show that honest working people are wise and that the despotic noblemen and government officials of the old days were incompetent.

The book also includes stories about faith, fidelity, friendship, the worth and dignity of labour and the good

manners and customs peculiar to the Korean nation.

Some folktales describe how evil and injustice could be punished without a struggle and honest people could naturally come to lead a happy life, and others describe flights of fantasy.

It must be taken into account that these tales were first told in ancient times.

They reflect the limitations of the age when people lacked a scientific world outlook.

However, each of these folk stories describes the aspirations and beautiful dreams of our ancestors and the valuable lessons they learned in their lives.

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A Fisherman and a Monkey

Once upon a time a fisherman went to the seashore with a mesh bag over his shoulder to gather clams. There were many clams on the sand, for it was just after the ebb tide.

As he walked along the sand he picked up clams and put them into his mesh bag. A monkey sitting in the sun far away saw him.

"What is that man gathering? Perhaps he is fishing." The monkey, which wondered at everything men did, was seized with curiosity. It wanted to catch fish like the man and fill its empty stomach.

The monkey sprang to its feet and strolled to the shore.

Clams as big as a fist were moving at a snail's pace along the sand, their shells open.

The monkey, which had never seen a clam before, lowered its head and gazed into the shells. He could see delicious-looking flesh inside.

"The fisherman must have caught some of these fish and put them into his mesh bag.... They look very tasty."

The monkey wanted to catch and eat the fish. It looked over the sand and saw an unusually big clam with its shell wide open.

"Fine. I'll eat that one."

To the monkey the clam seemed to be disappearing into its shell, so quickly it put one of its fingers inside to pull it out. But suddenly the startled clam closed its shell and nipped the monkey's finger.

"Ouch!" cried the monkey, desperately shaking its arm, trying to release its finger. But it was held so tightly that the monkey could not pull it out. The helpless monkey could not bear the pain and cried bitterly.

The monkey's cry was carried on the breeze to the fisherman.

"What is that noise?" said the fisherman, who had happily been gathering clams for some time, and looked around. He saw the monkey crying on the sand.

"What's the matter with that monkey?" he wondered and, thinking that the monkey might be in trouble, he hastened to it. The monkey, with its finger held by the clam, was crying.

The fisherman felt sorry for the monkey and went up to it to help it. But the monkey became frightened and jumped to its feet to run away. Quickly the fisherman seized the sand-covered monkey and patted it on the head. Only then did it calm down, apparently realizing that the fisherman had no intention to capture it.

The fisherman quickly took out a knife and opened the clam's shell to release the monkey's finger.

The monkey, which had thought that it would be killed by the fisherman, was grateful for being saved and bowed to him time and again.

Even after returning home the monkey could not forget the fisherman. So it told its fellow monkeys about the kindhearted fisherman. After listening to the story they said, “Men will speak ill of you for having your finger pinched by the clam, and will say that you are a fool.” “You seem to have put us monkeys to great shame.”

At this the monkey was ashamed and could not raise its head.

“I’ll repay his kindness and, at the same time, prove that we monkeys aren’t stupid,” it thought.

The next day the monkey saw the fisherman going to the shore to gather clams again.

It went out to a turn in the path along which the fisherman would return, carrying a lump of meat with a string through it.

By the path there stood a big tree thick with foliage. The monkey climbed the tree and hung the lump of meat from one of its branches. Then it hid itself in the leaves of the tree and remained there, holding a branch in its paw.

After a while a hawk flew to the tree, attracted by the smell of the meat. It swooped down on the lump of meat. The monkey had been awaiting its chance, and the moment the hawk was about to grasp the piece of meat with its claws, the monkey released its hold on the branch. The branch struck the body of the hawk hard. With a scream it fell to the ground and died.

The monkey, having captured the hawk with ease, took hold of the branch again and waited for another bird. This time a large eagle attacked the piece of meat.

Employing the same method, the monkey killed it without difficulty.

In this way it captured a hawk, an eagle, a crane and several other birds. They were piled up, one on to top of another, under the tree.

Towards evening the fisherman, on his way home with his mesh bag full of clams over his shoulder, had a surprise.

"What are these birds lying dead in a pile?" he wondered and picked up one of them to smell it. He judged that they had been killed only a short time before.

Wondering how so many birds had been killed, he looked up into the tree and saw the monkey which he had saved the previous day sitting at the top.

Then the fisherman realized that the monkey had captured them to repay his kindness.

"The monkey, even though he has no wings, is clever enough to catch flying animals. Truly he is a wise animal. If I sell these birds, it will be a great help to me!" said the fisherman, admiring the monkey's wisdom.

As it listened to him, the monkey was overjoyed and wanted to dance. To the monkey, it was pleasant to have been helpful to the poor fisherman, but it was still more delightful to be praised for being clever.

Immediately the monkey went running home and told its companions how it had been praised.

"Thanks to you we monkeys have become famous."

"We thought you had brought disgrace on us, but, on the contrary, you've brought distinction."

His fellow monkeys for a long time spoke highly of the monkey who, having damaged the prestige of monkeys, had recovered and enhanced it.



Three Brothers and Their Younger Sister

Once upon a time there was a peasant with three honest and diligent sons. The sons were devoted to their father and worked hard, and all the villagers envied them.

The old peasant was delighted, but at the back of his mind he had one regret.

"If only I had a daughter, I would envy no-one at all...."

His earnest desire was to have a daughter, and often this would be on his lips.

As luck would have it, his wife gave birth to a pretty girl.

So dearly did he love his only daughter, who had come to him in his latter years, that he brought her up with the tenderest care.

She grew up rapidly and was as beautiful as a rose in bloom. The peasant devoted his affection exclusively to his daughter.

The summer of the year when she was ten years old came. One day she went to pick strawberries beyond the hills, but a nine-tailed old fox had hidden in the field to prey on her.

The fox spun round and round several times and was turned into the "daughter"; then he returned to her home.

Little did the kindhearted and honest peasant dream that his pretty "daughter" who had come home smiling gently with a basketful of red strawberries was an old fox.

From that time the daughter now curried favour with her father with a sweet smile and now nicely swindled him by playing the coquette.

However, blinded by love for his "daughter", the peasant treated her with affection and did everything she wished, accepting her every word as true.

Then a strange thing began happening at the house. Every night one of the chickens in the hen coop would die for no obvious reason.

It was truly strange for hens to die suddenly overnight in silence, without having been sick.

"This is a clear sign that our family will be ruined. We must discover the reason for this," thought the old man.

He summoned his eldest son and said to him, "I want you to watch by the shed tonight, without sleeping, to see what is killing the chickens."

With this, he gave him one *toe* (One *toe* equals about 0.4 gallon—Tr.) of parched bean.

The son went out to the shed and stayed on the lookout, eating the parched bean whenever he felt sleepy.

The night was far advanced. The singing of grass insects died away and silence reigned. Suddenly the son heard the sound of light footsteps.

Containing his fear, he hid in a corner and looked towards the place from where the sound was coming.

But there was a surprise in store for him. It was none other than his young "sister" who had come into the shed.

Cautiously she stepped up to the hen coop. She opened the mouth of the biggest chicken, took out its liver with her fingers and ate it greedily. Then she returned to her room.

In great shock, the son stood agape for a while. Stealthily he went up to the hen coop and discovered that the chicken which had its liver removed was dead.

He was in a cold sweat. As soon as day dawned, he hurried to his father and told him what he had seen during the night.

Having heard him, his father became angry and scolded him:

"It can't be. I think that while you were watching the hen coop you fell asleep and had a dream."

With this, he told his second son to watch the hen coop the following night.

"If you feel sleepy during the night, eat some beans and you won't feel sleepy any more. Don't doze but keep a sharp lookout so that you discover what is happening."

The father gave him one *toe* of parched bean.

As his father had told him, he hid in the corner of the shed immediately after sunset.

For a long time he remained on the lookout, chewing the beans, but nothing happened. However, at dawn he heard light footsteps. He looked around with his eyes wide open. This time, too, his young "sister" slipped into the hut and took out and ate a chicken's liver.

When day dawned, he told his father what he had witnessed.

The father flared up and rebuked him:

"Bah! You've been plotting with your elder brother to do your sister harm out of jealousy because I've shown affection for her. I can't live under the same roof with such unfaithful sons as you, so get out of the house at once!"

In the fury of his passion, the father threw his two sons out of the house. Then he told his third son to watch the hen coop the following night.

The son was stiff with fright as he waited in the corner. He, too, clearly saw his younger "sister" eating a chicken's liver. But, it seemed to him that if he told the truth to his father, he would be thrown out like his two elder brothers, so he lied: "I saw the chicken collapse in the night."

"Yes, of course, that's it. Truly you are my son. The two who made up stories to spite their sister are not my sons."

The father was pleased, accepting the third son's word as true. So, by ingratiating himself with his father, the son avoided being thrown out of the house.

The eldest and second sons, having been expelled from home, guiltless, led a wandering life.

One day, as they were trudging along a mountain path aimlessly, they met an old man lying by the roadside. He was grey-haired and groaning with pain.

They took pity on him and carried him on their backs to his hut.

"Thank you. Where are you going now?" asked the old man who, thanks to them, had recovered.

“We have been sent away by our father and are wandering from place to place.”

They told him how they had been thrown out of home.

“That’s a great shame,” the old man said, having listened to them attentively; then he gave them three bottles.

“I’ve nothing but these bottles to give you. Please take them. The bottle of white water is a bottle of thorns, the bottle of red water is a bottle of fire and the bottle of blue water is a bottle of water. If you are ever in dire need, throw them and they will help you.”

With this he explained how to use the bottles. The brothers left with the three bottles in their hands.

When they went back home a few years later, they were feeling very lonely.

Weeds had overrun the garden of their old house, and it no longer looked like a home.

This seemed strange to them, and they entered the house.

“My elder brothers, where have you been all this while?”

Their “sister” came hurriedly out of the silent house and greeted them.

Carefully they studied their “sister’s” face. Her eyes gleamed red like fire.

“Where are our father and mother?” asked the eldest son.

“They have passed away.”

“Then, where is our younger brother?”

“He has also died.”

“Where are our animals and chickens?”

“I killed and ate the pigs and chickens.”

The brothers realized that their red-eyed sister had devoured everything, including the domestic animals and fowls.

They shuddered and felt they could no longer remain there.

As they waited for an opportunity to run away, they said to their "sister" with a smile:

"Listen. We're thirsty after our long walk. Go to the Undang Spring at the foot of the hill over there and bring some of the cool water we used to drink."

"I'll fetch some right away. Go inside and rest," said their "sister", and she went off to the spring carrying a water jar on her head.

Immediately, the brothers, who had been watching for an opportunity, fled from the house.

The "sister" brought some water, but she found that her brothers had taken flight and immediately went after them.

"So! You think I can't catch up with you? Stop!" shouted the "sister", flinging off her human clothing.

The brothers turned to see the nine-tailed old fox chasing them.

Only then did they realize that the girl had been a fox disguised as a human being.

The fox was narrowing the distance between them.

Just at the moment when, if it were to stretch out its paw, it could seize their clothing, the eldest brother threw the white bottle given them by the old man to use in time of peril.

A thick growth of thorny tree appeared behind them.

The fox desperately pursued them, forcing its way through the growth, thorns piercing it all over its body.



Again, they were on the point of being seized by it. This time, the second son threw the red bottle in the fox's path.

The moment the bottle broke, flames flashed and became a sheet of fire.

Despite being pierced all over with thorns and being caught in the fire, the fox ran persistently after them.

"Do you think I'll let you get away? I'll eat both of you," shouted the fox desperately.

Braving the fire, the fox almost caught up with the brothers. Then the eldest boy threw the last, blue bottle. There was a roar of waves and a blue sea opened up in the way of the fox.

The fox, having been pierced by thorns and caught in a fire, found itself in a sea and, pawing the air, drowned.

They say that the two brothers, having avenged the death of their parents and siblings, returned home and led a happy life.





The Ungrateful Tiger

Once upon a time an old tiger lived in a dark rock lair on the top of Kwanmo Peak.

The tiger idled away his time there. When hungry, he hunted for prey and, after eating it, slept.

One day, after eating the leg of a roe deer, the tiger reflected on his past life.

As he considered his life, its absurdity became more apparent.

"I have grown old living in idleness. The world is said to be wide, but I have remained shut up here like a frog in a well. Before I get any older, I'd like to see the famous Kumgang Mountains."

For a while he remained deep in thought, blinking his eyes. Then he got to his feet and set out on his journey.

In daylight he stayed in woods, fearful of hunters, and at night he crossed valleys until, after ten days, he reached the Kumgang Mountains.

The Kumgang Mountains were even more beautiful than he had been told.

Innumerable peaks rose and limpid streams flowed in the valleys. Waterfalls gushed over sheer precipices into pools where fairies are said to have come down to bathe.

The tiger looked around the valleys and made his way to Hoeyang, crossing the Tanbal Pass.

For several days the tiger roamed about, until he became hungry.

As he looked around for food he heard the whining of a dog.

The ears of the tiger pricked up and he went stealthily in the direction from which the sound had come.

After going a short distance a strange house came into sight. The tiger approached it and looked inside. Through the open gate he could see a whining dog.

Sighting prey after such a long time, the tiger was eager to leap at it.

But he thought again; there was something suspicious.

"That dog is a domestic animal. So, why is it so deep in the mountains? Might it not be bait set by cunning people to capture me?"

The tiger shook his head doubtfully. However hungry he was, he should not rise to the bait, he thought. He turned away, biting his lip.

He regretted having to leave the prey.

He felt his dignity as the king of the forest had been impaired.

"Why am I so frightened? Am I not a tiger? If the dog is bait, I can eat it and then break out of the trap, can't I?" said the tiger impatiently.

So, to show his dignity, he roared and charged through the open gate, which closed behind the tiger, catching him inside.

The tiger tried to escape by breaking down the wall with his claws, but all to no avail.

The tiger lost heart.

He believed he would be dead from exhaustion in a few days.

"Lord, please help this poor tiger!" prayed the tiger in tears, rubbing his forelegs.

But no help came.

The tiger could not leave, being caught inside the gate, and so passed the night there.

The next morning the tiger was musing with his eyes shut when he heard footsteps on dead leaves.

The tiger looked narrowly in the direction from which the noise was coming.

Someone was coming up the mountain path.

"He is going to kill me. I must be at my best in the face of death." With this thought, the tiger roared.

Surprised, the man coming up the mountain stopped in his tracks.

He was an old monk from Yujom Temple.

When he saw the tiger caught in the trap, he shuddered and decided to make a detour.

The tiger, who had lived for many years in mountains, knew that monks cared for animals.

In a pitiful voice, the tiger begged the monk for help.

"Generous Lord, unfortunately I walked into a trap on my way to the Kumgang Mountains for religious instruction. Take mercy on me and help me."

When he heard this entreaty, the old monk, who had taken a detour for fear of the tiger, retraced his steps.

"If I leave the poor creature in this trap, I will sin against Buddha. I must save it before it is killed by a

hunter." With this thought he said to the tiger, "If I rescue you, you won't hurt me, will you?"

Certainly not. However pitiless I might be, I could not hurt my saviour. If you save me, I will never forget what you have done for me."

After listening to the entreaty of the tiger, the old monk opened the gate.

Freed from the trap, the tiger kneeled to the monk and said, "Were it not for you, I would certainly have died. How can I ever repay your kindness?"

The tiger bowed to him and then headed for the woods.

However, he suddenly turned back, struck with an idea.

"Lord, will you do me another favour?" the tiger asked.

"What is it?"

"You are serving Buddha, so how can you not know what the favour is, but ask me? Buddha teaches that the hungry should be given food. I'm hungry now and want to eat you."

Thus the tiger revealed his true colours.

"You ferocious rogue! I saved your life, yet you want to eat me. Is there anyone as ungrateful as you in the world?" the old monk reproached the tiger.

The tiger retorted in a terrible voice, "You old man! I know the Buddhist teachings. What are you saying? The Buddhist teachings forbid the killing of animals. People like you attempted to kill me by setting a trap. So don't ask me for mercy."

The tiger made ready to leap at the old monk.

In this tight corner, the old monk said in entreaty, "I



know you are hungry, but you may fall ill if you eat me. You'd better consult someone before eating me."

The tiger hesitated at this.

"Fine, let's ask someone," said the tiger cautiously, having already fallen into one trap.

The old monk asked some nearby arrowroot vines.

"Arrowroot vine, listen to me. I released the tiger from a trap and now he is going to eat me. Have you ever heard of such a thing?"

An arrowroot vine replied with an air of displeasure, "The sight of monks like you makes me shudder. You cut and strip arrowroot vines and made nun's hats or cushions for Buddha with them. How can we stand that? I hope you become food for the tiger."

At this the tiger was delighted and prepared to swallow the monk.

The old monk said to the tiger again, "The arrowroot vine is mistaken about me. Let's ask a rabbit."

The old monk stopped a rabbit which was hopping towards him.

"Rabbit, I have saved the tiger from a trap. Now he is going to eat me. Have you ever heard of such a thing?"

The tiger said, "Rabbit, Buddha teaches that hungry animals should be given food. Doesn't it stand to reason that I should eat the old monk?"

The rabbit said, his ears twitching, "I've listened to you, but I can't understand what happened. If I see how the situation was, I can answer."

The tiger and the old monk agreed to reproduce the original situation.

At first the tiger said, turning to the trap, "I rushed into the trap," and he entered.

"How did the gate close?"

"Like this," said the monk and closed the gate.

Seeing this, the rabbit laughed and said, "Now I understand. Now you can do as you like, save or kill him."

Caught in the trap, the tiger roared but could not touch the old monk.

"Rabbit, thank you," said the monk, having narrowly escaped death, and he stroked the head of the rabbit as a gesture of gratitude for saving his life.

"You must remember that you may bring a calamity upon yourself if you show mercy for ferocious types," the rabbit said to the monk.

"He who is ungrateful will not be treated kindly again," said the rabbit reproachfully to the tiger.

Then, the rabbit hopped into the woods.

Later the tiger, caught in the trap, was killed by a hunter.





A Mysterious Brush

Once upon a time a young farmhand called Chondong lived in an isolated village.

He enjoyed drawing pictures, but working as a farm servant he could not afford to buy a brush.

So, when he went gathering firewood, he would draw pictures on the ground with a stick and when he went to the riverside, he would draw pictures on the sand.

After three years he had become remarkably skilled in drawing.

He drew birds so vividly that they seemed to take flight, and the fish he drew seemed to swim with their tail fins waving.

The villagers admired his pictures and all asked him to draw a picture on sheets of paper they had brought.

However, he was unable to do so because he had no brush.

"I would like to have a brush." This thought haunted him constantly.

One day when he was gathering firewood on the mountain, he sat down by a tree and, leaning against it, fell asleep.

A cloud of mist rose and his dear mother appeared from somewhere.

She had died too early to bring up her son.

"Chondong, why are you sad?" asked Chondong's mother sympathetically, as she approached him.

"Mother, I would like to draw pictures for the villagers, but I have no brush."

"You are very thoughtful. Wait a moment."

Then she disappeared, but a short time later, reappeared with a brush.

"Take this," she said, holding out a shining golden brush.

"Oh, a brush!" he cried joyfully, taking it.

He woke from his dream, but his mother was nowhere to be seen.

He was surprised to see that he still held the brush his mother had given him in his dream.

"Oh, how kind my mother is!"

Chondong pressed the brush to his chest and rubbed it against his face.

Chondong believed the brush to be a token of his mother's love for him.

He began to draw the pictures the villagers asked him to draw.

First he drew a picture of a blue bird for his neighbour. But the bird flew off the paper, flapping its wings, and flew around the yard.

Then he drew a picture of a crane. No sooner had he put down his brush than the bird flew off the paper and flew around.

The local landlord, who was reclining in his chamber, saw the birds.

Prompted by curiosity, he went over to Chondong's house.

Craning his neck, he peered inside and discovered that the birds had all emerged from the pictures drawn by Chondong with his brush.

"I wonder where he got such a mysterious brush?" he thought.

A feeling of greed overcame the landlord.

He decided to take the brush away from Chondong and draw pictures himself.

"You rascal! Where did you get that brush? Give it to me at once," shouted the landlord, entering the room. "I won't. My mother gave it to me," said Chondong, clasping the brush to his chest so as not to be deprived of it.

"How could your dead mother have given it to you? Give it to me."

The landlord jumped at Chondong to take the brush away from him.

Chondong ran out of the room to avoid being deprived of it.

"You rascal! Stop!" said the landlord, in hot pursuit.

Clutching the brush, Chondong ran out of the village as quickly as he could.

The landlord, who was panting from his run, took to his horse and began to catch up with Chondong.

With his brush, Chondong drew a picture of a golden horse on some paper.

The golden horse neighed loudly, emitting fire from its mouth and smoke from its ears.

Chondong mounted the horse and it galloped away.

The landlord chased after him, shouting, "Stop! Stop!"

Chondong drew a picture of an arrow and shot it at the landlord.

The arrow flew and hit him on the forehead. The landlord fell to the ground and died.

Chondong was pleased to see this and went on galloping.

The golden horse crossed mountains and rivers before stopping at a village of straw-thatched houses.

Some poor people who had roamed in search of a livelihood had settled down there.

The villagers farmed with hoes, having no cattle or ploughs.

Children kept their houses, with nothing to wear, and no smoke rose from the chimneys.

Chondong was moved at the sight of the poor people.

Producing his brush from inside his clothing he began to draw.

They had no ox, plough or rice jar, so he drew them for the villagers. Then real oxen, ploughs and rice emerged from the pictures.

The children began studying by candlelight, wearing clothes they had obtained from Chondong's picture.

Laughter and singing drifted from every house, and the whole village was completely changed.

The villagers came to lead a rich life thanks to Chondong, and they were devoted to him.

One day a pedlar called at the village. He heard what had happened there and spread the news far and wide.

The news reached the ears of the greedy king.

"Bring Chondong to me right away," the king ordered his servants.

Chondong was taken to the royal palace.

"You draw pictures that move, I hear. Show me your skill," said the king to Chondong.

Producing his brush from inside his clothing, Chondong drew a toad.

The odious toad moved towards the king.

The king frowned and shouted angrily, "Throw that rascal into prison."

The king's servants seized Chondong, took away his brush and marched him off to prison.

The king was delighted to have obtained the brush.

He wanted to draw pictures with the brush himself.

Stroking his beard, the king thought over what he should draw.

"Hm, I should draw a piece of gold, the most valuable in the world," he said to himself.

He took up the brush and drew a piece of gold as large as a dish.

For some reason the piece of gold became a stone which came rolling towards the king and hit him on his foot.

"I must have made a mistake in drawing the picture. I must draw a tree, because that's easy."

As he rubbed his injured foot, the king drew a picture of a crooked tree.

The tree was transformed into a serpent which, with its mouth open, writhed towards the king.

Frightened, the king fled.

He was so frightened that he began to perspire.

The king was confined to bed for three days because of illness. Then he suddenly ordered that Chondong be brought to him. When Chondong came, the king gave him the golden brush and said, "If you do what I say, I

will ensure that you live in luxury in the royal palace. Draw a picture of a lake."

"Certainly. What kind of lake should I draw?" Chondong asked the king, as if to humour him.

"Draw a limpid blue lake surrounded by weeping willows."

Chondong took up his brush and drew a limpid lake hemmed by weeping willows with a mist hanging over it.

The king was delighted at the sight of the picture and said, stroking his beard, "Hm, there should be fish. Draw fish in the lake."

"Certainly."

Taking up his brush, Chondong added a few touches to the picture. They changed into fish and the lake became alive with them.

When he saw the picture, the king was pleased. Then he said, stroking his beard, "Now that I've seen the lake, I should like to go boating. Now draw a boat on the lake." "Certainly, I will do as you wish," said Chondong making a few strokes with his brush.

Then a boat appeared on the lake.

The king boarded the boat and started rowing, humming merrily.

After enjoying himself for a while, the king said to Chondong, "The lake is calm, so this is no fun. Make the water choppy."

"Certainly, I will do as you ask."

Chondong added a few strokes to the picture.

The water in the lake began to roll.

"This is no fun. The boat is only rolling a little. Make the boat roll heavily," urged the king.

Chondong made vigorous strokes with his brush.

High waves began to rise on the lake.

The boat with the king in it began rolling like a leaf on the high waves, was swallowed up and sank. Thus the wicked king was drowned in the lake.

After that Chondong, taking up his brush, drew a picture of a golden horse, which became a real one. Riding the golden horse, he returned to his village.

The villagers welcomed him.

Chondong helped the diligent and honest people and lived for many, many years in happiness with them.





The Story of a Mountain Shrine

Once upon a time there was a village deep in a mountain recess.

The forest surrounding it was so thick that scarcely any sunlight penetrated it.

Many wild animals lived in the forest. Every night they would go to the village to prey on domestic animals, and sometimes even on men.

Because of these raids the villagers enjoyed not a moment's peace.

They believed they were suffering because they had annoyed the mountain god, and so every year they held services in honour of the mountain god at the mountain shrine built at the foot of a sheer cliff. They used to sacrifice girls to the god.

They believed that this would ward off calamity and ensure them bumper crops.

Those with daughters offered them for sacrifice in turns.

In the village there lived an old man called So who had a single daughter. The time came for her to be sacrificed.

To offer his beloved 16-year-old daughter as a sacrifice—the thought devastated the old man.

"Does heaven have no feeling? What sin have I committed that I should offer my only daughter in sacrifice?"

The old man passed many days in gloomy thought and in tears.

The girl was overcome with grief. Her sorrow grew greater day by day.

One day she stood at the open door of her house looking up at the distant sky, tears in her eyes.

A toad crept up to the doorstep, moving its mouth and looking up at the girl.

Thinking that the toad was hungry, the girl threw a ball of rice to it.

The toad caught it as if it had been expecting it and went off into the woods.

From then on, every day the toad came to her home and the girl never forgot to feed it.

Fed on rice, the toad grew until it was as big as a calf.

And then the day on which the girl would be sacrificed arrived.

The girl began to dress.

She felt heartbroken, but would not cry aloud, thinking of her parents' grief.

However hard she tried to control herself, still tears trickled down her cheeks.

At the gate she parted in tears from her parents, who cried pitifully, their arms outstretched. "Dear daughter, don't go!"

"Father! Mother!" she cried and, reluctant to leave her parents, squatted down and wept and wept, her face buried in her skirt.

She cried so pitifully that the villagers present at the scene also wept. The whole village was deep in sorrow.

Before long the palanquin bearing the girl left for the mountain shrine.

There some people murmured something, offering food to the altar before placing the girl in front of it.

After the services the people dispersed in ones and twos, leaving the girl alone.

Soon night fell and the crickets began chirping.

Suddenly she heard a rumble, as if the cliff behind the mountain shrine was crumbling, and there appeared a centipede as large as an ox.

The girl, who was trembling in fear, fainted at the sight of the huge centipede.

The centipede crept down the rock to pounce upon the girl, but suddenly the toad appeared from beneath the altar and sent poison from its mouth.

The centipede threw itself upon the toad. Again the toad spurted poison at the centipede.

The centipede screamed and died.

The toad went up to the altar, placed the girl on its back and carried her home. When her parents saw the exhausted toad crossing their threshold, their daughter on its back, they wondered if they were dreaming and shed tears of joy.

They put their daughter in the warmest part of the room and rubbed her limbs. After a while she came to herself.

However, they could not pass on the happy news to the other villagers because if some misfortune were to

befall the village, they would be blamed for having annoyed the mountain god.

Their joy at the return of their daughter was indescribable, but being poor, it was difficult for them to offer something to eat to the large toad. Sometimes they had to miss meals.

Learning of this, the toad would go away at nights and return with rice and salt.

One morning when the old man was sitting at the breakfast table, the toad came up to him and turned over the table.

The old man was angry, but he controlled himself.

After all, the toad was the benefactor who had saved his daughter's life.

Without betraying his feelings, he told his daughter to lay the table again. But the toad upset it again.

Again the old man contained his anger.

The daughter set the table for the third time, but the toad picked it up and threw it at the old man.

The old man could contain himself no longer and hit the toad on the head with a wooden club.

Suddenly a mist filled the room and a sturdy young man appeared, removing the toad's skin. He had been transformed into a toad by magic and could throw off its shape only by being hit.

The young man was not only strong but also a fine archer.

The old man made him his son-in-law.

From that day the wild animals ceased to raid the village and hurt people.

No longer were girls sacrificed to the mountain god, and the villagers lived happily and harmoniously together.



Three Lazy Windbags

The intense cold had held for several days as three pedlars walked along a mountain path. The bamboo comb pedlar in a quilted jacket was at the head of them, the salt pedlar in leather shoes behind him and the cotton cloth pedlar in a fur hat at the rear.

The sun was low in the west but still they had not seen an inn where they could stay overnight.

They went on and on, dragging their weary feet. At last they came on a hunting lodge. “We should stay here for the night,” each of them thought. The three pedlars went into the lodge together, but it was empty.

They sat down, putting their belongings in a corner.

The room was cold, not having been lived in for a long time.

“If the room is heated, it will be warm,” said the bamboo comb pedlar, who was shivering from the cold.

“Yes, we will get warm.”

“We will not only get warm but also sleep comfortably,” the salt and cotton cloth pedlars

chimed in, but no one moved to make a fire.

They looked at one another, each hoping that someone else would make a fire.

A biting wind blew outside, rattling the papered door.

The salt pedlar, having put up with the cold for some time, said, "Old fellows, I have a flint. I'll make a fire if you bring firewood."

But, shaking his head, the bamboo comb pedlar said, "Making a fire using a flint will take time. I have a box of matches, though they are not completely dry. Once they have dried, I will be able to get a light from them. So you fetch the firewood."

The cotton cloth pedlar cut him short, saying, shaking his head, "I wonder how long you will take to make a fire if your matches must dry. I have a friction match which gives a light when scratched on the wall. You gather the firewood and leave it to me to make a fire."

None of them wanted to gather firewood and they all tried to persuade the others to do it.

The night advanced and a cold draught came in through the chinks between the shutters.

The unheated floor was ice-cold. The three pedlars shivered like aspen trees.

They could hear their teeth chattering with the cold.

Unable to bear the cold, the bamboo comb pedlar addressed the salt pedlar, "I can't stand the cold. Let's build a fire quickly. But I'm wearing only hemp-cord sandals, so my feet are frozen and I cannot walk. You're wearing leather shoes, so please be kind to your friends and bring some firewood."

The salt pedlar in leather shoes excused himself, saying, "Well, it would be a good idea to bring firewood

for you two, but as I have no fur hat, my ears are frozen. As you have a fur hat, I must ask you to do so."

The cotton cloth pedlar, who was wearing a fur hat, said, "Well, I would like to fetch firewood for you others, but having no overcoat, I have caught a chill. As you bamboo comb pedlar are wearing an overcoat, please help us two." Thus the cotton cloth pedlar excused himself.

So, while trying to make the others fetch firewood, they made no fire.

The draught coming into the room in the early hours of the morning was so cold that it became difficult for them to sit still.

Sitting, bent double, they felt so cold that they began to move about.

Each of them knew that the others were moving about because of the cold.

The cotton cloth pedlar in a fur hat jeered at the others, saying, "As I am wearing a fur hat, I am warm. You seem to be very cold. If you are cold, bring some firewood and make a fire. You only need to put some wood in the fireplace to heat the floor. Why are you sitting on the ice-cold floor, shivering?"

Realizing that the cotton cloth pedlar was crafty and trying to take advantage of them, the salt pedlar said, "Cold? As I am wearing leather shoes, I get warm from my feet upwards, and I'm even perspiring. No one can bear the cold better than I can. I pity you, having no leather shoes. Bring some firewood, light a fire and then you won't be shivering."

Offended at this, the bamboo comb pedlar said, "I'm sure that I, with my overcoat, can stand the cold better



than you in your leather shoes. I'm so warm that I'm drenched with perspiration, but you are a sorry sight. You have business to do and must look after yourselves. Don't be stubborn, but bring some firewood and make a fire."

So each of them excused himself and tried to persuade the others to make a fire, but to no avail.

It was bitterly cold and they were freezing.

All three passed a sleepless night, with their faces buried between their legs.

Their lips froze and they were unable to try to persuade one another.

Gradually they began to lose consciousness and they yawned. They became drowsy. In a short time all three would be dead.

Just then the old hunter returned to his lodge.

He had brought firewood, and kindled a fire in the fireplace.

Gradually the floor was heated and the room became warm.

The pedlars, who were on the verge of death, opened their eyes and came to themselves.

"How is it that you are lying on the floor in this cold?" the hunter asked, shocked by what he saw.

"It is because I have two bad types as friends. I wanted to kindle a fire, but these fellows would not bring firewood," the bamboo comb pedlar said.

"Because I met two lazy and stubborn fellows, I nearly froze to death," said the salt and cotton cloth pedlars, accusing the others.

On hearing what they had to say the hunter was disgusted and said, "What a disgrace it is that you wouldn't kindle a fire but stayed here shivering. You're

lucky to be alive. Get out of here." Thus he turned the lazy pedlars out of doors.





A Son-in-Law Chosen by Buddha

In olden days a woodman called Tolsoe lived in a remote village.

As his family was poor he had not married, though he was rather old, and so had to wear his hair in long plaits. He was extremely ashamed of this.

There were married boys younger than him who wore topknots, but, to his shame, even though he was bearded he was called a bachelor.

He wanted to marry as soon as possible, but no family wished to marry their daughter to him so poor.

"In this way I will remain a bachelor all my life," he would think, shocked.

He could not remain idle, waiting for a likely bride to appear.

So he strove to find a bride for himself.

One day, he was on his way back home from a hill with a load of firewood on his back, when he saw a pretty girl scooping up water from a spring surrounded by weeping willows.

Her face was fair and she wore a yellow jacket, black skirt and silk ribbons in her long plaited hair.

Tolsoe was attracted by the girl. Wanting to get acquainted with her, he quietly stepped up to her.

She had filled her jar with spring water and was about to place it on her head.

He hurried up to her and helped her to lift the jar on to her head.

She glanced at the strange lad helping her and blushed.

She seemed to be attracted by him.

She walked off towards her home, and he was unable to address her.

Tolsoe greatly regretted this.

Whose daughter is she? Should I follow her? With this thought, he looked in the direction in which she was going.

The girl carried on, wiping away the drops of water that trickled down the jar, and passed through the brushwood gate of a straw-thatched house.

Tolsoe stealthily followed her, his carrier on his back.

He wanted to speak to her.

"Is the master of the house at home?" Tolsoe called in a deep voice, suppressing his excitement.

After a while the gate opened and a grey-haired woman appeared.

"Why have you come here?" she asked dubiously.

"Would you like to buy some firewood? I have a load of firewood with me," Tolsoe said as a woodman usually did.

"I will buy some if it is dry," she said, showing him into the yard.

The house was tidy, though it was straw-thatched.

Putting his A-frame carrier down in the yard, he sat

down on the verandah and asked for a bowl of water.

The woman went to the kitchen without a word and brought a bowl of water.

Taking it, Tolsoe asked her casually, "I think you have a daughter, so why do you bring me water? Young men like to be served with water by girls."

"How do you know whether I have a daughter or not?" she said, regarding Tolsoe as if he were being rather cheeky.

"As butterflies seek flowers, so young men seek girls. Would you present her to me to see whether we are suited?"

"What? No, I won't. Get out of here right away."

The woman had become angry and pushed Tolsoe in the back. He was not discouraged, and he asked boldly, "Old lady, why are you so angry? Am I so inferior? Don't turn your back on good fortune. Let me see your daughter."

"How can a woodman be good fortune? I don't want such a son-in-law."

"Don't you know that like attracts like? I'm diligent and honest. What more could you desire?"

The woman merely said, "Get out of here," and turned him out of the gate.

"There is no hope of marriage for a woodman like me", he thought, offended, and turned on his heels, dejected.

Tolsoe never spoke again about getting married. He would go to the hills for firewood without a word.

One day he was gathering firewood on a hill when a light rain began to fall. So he went into a temple under a zelkova tree to take shelter.



Inside he found a woman praying to Buddha.

He stopped and stood silently watching as she prayed.

She laid good food on the altar before the Buddha and said her prayers, rubbing her hands together.

"Lord Buddha, I have a single daughter. May she marry a rich man. May a good match for my daughter be presented to me, a poor widow who leads a hard life with her single daughter."

She repeated her prayer.

As she has a daughter, she should pray to me and not to Buddha, Tolsoe thought and felt like laughing as he gazed stealthily at the woman.

He was certain that the grey-haired woman was the very woman who had once driven him out of her home.

Now Tolsoe knew what worried her.

He remembered how she had offended him and decided to pay her back.

As I am hungry, let me eat the offered food first, and with this thought he reached for the food on the altar, hiding behind the Buddha.

Absorbed in her prayers, with her head lowered, the woman did not notice Tolsoe taking the food.

Tolsoe crammed his pockets with rice cakes, pancakes, boiled eggs and other things.

Then the woman raised her head. When she saw that the food had disappeared, she thought that Buddha had eaten it, and she prayed more devoutly.

"You have responded to my devotion.... Thank you, Lord. Please eat well."

"Certainly I will eat well. I am pleased with the food you have brought," said Tolsoe in a dignified, sonorous voice as Buddha might have spoken. "But,

why does the food taste bad if you prepared it with devotion? If food is prepared by a sinful hand, it will bring harm."

"I understand, Lord."

When she heard that the food tasted bad, the old woman bowed to the ground.

Immediately Tolsoe went on:

"Listen. If you want to expiate your sin, you must pray for fifteen days from tomorrow, offering up food prepared by the clean hands of your daughter."

"I will surely do what you say," replied the woman, bowing, assuming that she was responding to the command of Buddha.

At her home, she helped her beloved daughter to prepare food with complete devotion. Every day at noon she offered prayers to Buddha, laying the food she had brought before him.

At noon Tolsoe would stop gathering firewood and go to the temple to take the food.

On the fifteenth the old woman laid sumptuous food out on the altar before Buddha. There was a whole boiled chicken holding a red pepper in its beak, a rib of pig and sausage.

Stealthily Tolsoe took them and ate them, before saying in a dignified voice.

"As you have offered devoted service, I will choose a match for your daughter. Tomorrow at noon you will find a young fisherman at the bend of a stream. Make him your son-in-law."

"I will. Thank you."

Believing that her desire was to be met, at noon the next day she went to the bend.

As expected, there she found a young man casting his line into the river.

"My son-in-law!"

She went running up to him and clasped his hands in hers.

She found that he was the woodman who had once visited her home selling firewood.

She was surprised, but as he had been chosen by Buddha as a husband for her daughter, she could not object.

She apologized for having treated him so badly and begged his forgiveness.

"I did not know that you had been chosen by Buddha to be my son-in-law, so I nearly turned away good fortune. Let's hurry to our home."

"I come from a noble family. How can I marry a poor girl?" said Tolsoe, following her, to see how she would react.

At his words her heart missed a beat.

"This is a match arranged by Buddha. If you act against his will, you will be punished. My daughter was born into a poor family, but she is beautiful and honest. She is faultless."

The woman secretly feared that she might lose a good match for her daughter.

He pretended to yield to her and followed her home.

He married her daughter and thus became her son-in-law.

Later the old woman learned that she had been deceived by him.

But she did not regret that she had married her daughter to him, for he was an honest and hardworking man.



The Disgraced Fox

Once a goat lived in village.

The goat grew old and reached his sixtieth birthday. He had many sons and daughters.

His sons and daughters got together and arranged a sumptuous sixtieth birthday party for their father. To it they invited the other animals in the area.

So, on the goat's sixtieth birthday the animals in the area gathered at his home. Among them were oxen, horses and other large animals, as well as rabbits, squirrels and other small animals. The goat's son welcomed the guests.

As they were seated in the order of their arrival, old and young animals were sitting side by side, and this caused confusion.

"Even when offering wine, a distinction must be made between old and young. It will not do for the seating to be so disorganized," said many of the animals in complaint. So then the seating was arranged in the order of seniority.

An uninvited fox rose with the intention to take the top seat.

"You rascal, how dare you occupy that seat?" said many old animals reproaching the fox for its insolence.

The fox half opened its mouth, revealing its ugly teeth, and said:

"Who in the world is as old as I, has been to as many places as I and knows as much about worldly matters as I? I have been to heaven and to the sea, as well as to the moon where I climbed the cinnamon tree there to count its branches. How many branches does it have? Who can answer?"

With these words the fox looked around, but no one dared to answer.

"You see. There is no one who is older than me and has more experience than me. I am the eldest."

The fox pushed aside the other animals and took the seat of honour.

The other animals were disgusted at the fox's behaviour but, having nothing to say, they watched it in silence.

The fox behaved rowdily as if it was the eldest, but just as it was about to be the first to drink a cup of wine, a sorrowful whimper was heard.

Surprised, the guests looked around and saw a turtle weeping, craning its short neck.

"What rudeness! You have come to toast the host at his sixtieth birthday party. How dare you cry as if you were at a funeral! You worthless fellow. Get out at once."

All the guests were enraged and wanted to have him thrown out.

Embarrassed, the turtle said in tears:

"I'm sorry. Please calm down and listen to me. I had a son. When he was young he brought two cinnamon trees and planted them in the field over there. The trees grew for thousands of years. But then he heard the rumour that the sky was likely to collapse, so he cut down the trees and carried them up to the sky to support it and so save the world. He died of exhaustion while building a dam with the branches of the trees to prevent the Milky Way overflowing and causing a flood.

"A shoot from the timber he used for the dam grew for thousands of years and became a large tree. On hearing of the cinnamon tree on the moon, I was reminded of my dead son and wept."

As they listened to what the turtle said, all the guests nodded.

"Truly you are the oldest in the world."

All the guests agreed and said to the fox.

"You cunning fox, give that seat to the turtle and get out of our sight."

Shamed by the turtle, the fox flushed and ran away. But the turtle refused to take the seat.

When the guests asked why he refused the seat, the turtle said, "To be honest, I used my imagination to get rid of that fox and add to the fun at the goat's sixtieth birthday party."

"Ha ha ha. So, that's what you were doing."

The guests admired the turtle for his clever idea and laughed heartily.



Twin Rocks

Once upon a time there were twin rocks.

Rapidly they grew large, drinking clear spring water.

On a hill behind them there lived a cock which, on the order of the King of the Sky, had come down to the Earth. The cock told the twin rocks about the rules of etiquette:

"When drinking spring water, you must use the dipper in the order of seniority."

So, at mealtimes the older rock drank water first, followed by the younger one.

The younger rock became unhappy about this.

I am smaller than the older rock because I drink water last, the younger rock thought.

The younger rock begged the older rock, "Older brother, from now on please let me drink the water first. Then I will grow as big as you, won't I?"

The older rock felt sorry for the younger rock.

"Fine. From today you may drink first."

The broad-minded older rock handed the dipper to the younger rock.

From that day on the younger rock drank first.

The younger rock was greedy and even drank the older rock's share of water.

For the older rock there was only a little water left over by the younger rock to drink, so it was always undernourished and feeling hungry. But, out of consideration for the younger rock, the older rock never said a word.

The younger rock rapidly grew and was soon the same size as the older rock.

Nevertheless, the younger rock would not hand the dipper to the older rock for him to drink first. Instead it would drink all the water in the spring in an attempt to grow bigger than the older rock.

The younger rock gradually grew bigger and was able to look down on the older rock.

Then the younger rock began to put on airs and say to the older rock, looking down on it, "From now on I'm the older brother. You must address me as older brother."

"What? If others know about this, what will they think of us? Please don't speak such nonsense," said the older rock.

"The biggest is the older brother. From now on you are my younger brother."

The younger rock began to throw its weight about, looking down on the older rock.

"I've never heard anything so absurd as a younger brother becoming the older brother!"

The villagers were shocked on hearing the news.

“How ungrateful he is!” they said.

The news reached the ears of the cock, the emissary of the King of the Sky.

The cock immediately conveyed the news to him.

On hearing the news, the King of the Sky grew angry.

“He is a despicable fellow lacking a sense of duty to those who brought him up. Break the backbone of that ungrateful younger rock,” said the enraged King of the Sky to the lightning.

The lightning flashed and a zigzag of fire struck the younger rock.

The younger rock was broken into two and collapsed.

The younger rock could no longer say that he was the older brother.



A Cat in a Hemp Hood

In a certain village there lived a farmer who cared a great deal for cats.

One day on his way back from the fields, he found a kitten mewing pitifully, having lost her mother.

Feeling sorry for her, he took her home and reared her.

At each meal he gave her food on a separate dish beside his table and at night allowed her to sleep in the warmest part of the house.

Under her master's kindly care the kitten grew quickly into a large cat.

The cat had big ears and round eyes and was clever and good at catching rats. She guarded the house well and always earned praise from her master.

One autumn the master fell ill and was confined to his bed.

He was treated by experienced physicians who gave him acupuncture and various medicines, but all to no avail.

The condition of the patient grew steadily worse.

One day a physician said, "There is no easy cure for

your illness. There is only one cure, but it will be difficult."

The master asked what it was.

The physician said:

"You have fallen ill because of the rats which harm the crops you put such great efforts into gathering every year. If you catch one thousand rats, you will get well. But how can you catch so many rats?"

"Fine. But one thousand rats...." said the master with a deep sigh. Even if he called on all the villagers to help, they would be unable to catch so many rats, he thought.

Tears gathered in his eyes and trickled down his cheeks.

The cat felt sorry for her master, and she, too, had tears in her eyes.

The cat could not remain unmoved by the sad plight of her master and left the house.

She called on the other cats in the village to discuss with them and, sitting by the chimney, would ponder over a solution.

Then the cat heard the voices from the other side of the hedge of mourners holding a memorial service at a neighbour's house.

The cat looked sadly over the hedge.

A bright idea hit the cat when she saw that the mourners were wearing hemp hoods to offer their condolences to the bereaved. She, too, wanted to be a mourner in a hemp hood.

Seeing her master's hemp hood hanging on the wall, the cat crept up to the wall and took it off its hanger. Wearing it, the cat went to a rat hole and waited for the rats to appear.

After a while a rat came out of the hole and, frightened at the sight of the cat, tried to retreat into the hole.

The cat spoke threateningly to the rat in an angry voice:

"You rascal, you thief, don't you have any sense of decency? I'm in mourning for my parents who died recently, but none of you rats has offered condolences. You are the most ill-mannered animals in the world. You seem to be gloating over my misfortune. You will see soon. I will bring all my friends and stamp out your ill-mannered breed."

Frightened, the rat went back into its hole and called together the other rats and talked the matter over with them.

"We must go to offer our condolences. Otherwise we will suffer a great misfortune."

"Certainly, we must do so. However wicked she may be, she would not harm visitors offering their condolences. Let me go to offer my condolences first and see how she behaves," said an old rat and crept out of the rat hole.

The old rat knelt down before the wailing cat and said, "We did not know you were in mourning, and we failed to express our condolences to you at the proper time. Please excuse us."

The cat did not harm the rat, but thanked him with good grace for his condolences.

Then one after another the rats came out, feeling relieved, and in turn expressed their sympathy.

The cat thanked each rat with good grace and said:

"Thank you for your condolences. There are many of

you, but I am one, so it is difficult for me to express my gratitude to everyone of you. Excuse me if I am rude, but I would be grateful if you all came together to offer your condolences."

She added that she would wait for them in the open yard on a particular day.

Since the proposal seemed sensible, the rats agreed.

They called on all the rats in the village, as well as all the field and mountain mice, and told them to gather in the yard on the appointed day.

Rats swarmed to the yard, where the cat in a hemp hood waited for them.

But there were several dozen other cats waiting in ambush.

The cat approached the rats to accept their condolences and began her mourning, when her fellow cats attacked and killed every one of the rats.

The dead rats lay in heaps. There were probably several thousands of them.

The cat looked at them with delight and, entering the house, pulled her mistress by her skirt.

Prompted by curiosity, she went outside and saw the heaps of dead rats. Delighted, she immediately told the glad news to her husband.

At this the master of the house who, it had been said, would never recover, rose from his sickbed in perfect health and began to work.

The villagers praised the cat for using her head to repay the kindness of her master.



Sparks

Once upon a time an old tiger lived in a deep mountain recess. Recklessly he preyed on rabbits, roe deer, badgers, racoons and other weak animals.

It liked to smoke.

One day the tiger was sitting under a pine tree about to strike a light from a flint and smoke a pipe, when pine needles began falling on his head.

The tiger looked up at the tree, blowing smoke from his nostrils.

He saw a white stork sitting on her eggs in a nest in the tree.

Looking at the white stork, the tiger said, “White stork, give me an egg. I’m hungry.”

“Do you think my eggs are for you? Don’t talk such nonsense.”

Exasperated, the tiger became threatening, “What? You must listen to me even though I’m speaking mildly. Otherwise, I’ll set fire to your tree.”

Frightened, the white stork sent an egg down to him.

She feared that her nest would be burnt if the ill-natured tiger were to set fire to the tree.

The tiger ate the egg in one gulp and said, "White stork, how tasty your egg is! Please send down another one. I want to eat more."

She wanted neither to give her eggs, from which her young would hatch, to the tiger nor to hurt his feelings. She wept.

Just then a hare came hopping from behind a hill and witnessed the sorry scene.

"Lady stork, why are you weeping?" the hare asked apprehensively.

The old tiger, who was squatting on his haunches watching the white stork, said. "Well met! I'm hungry!"

The tiger was about to pounce upon the hare.

The hare had failed to notice the tiger, looking only up at the tree. She shivered from fear, her eyes reddening. But suddenly a bright idea occurred to her.

"Mr. tiger, are you here? I've been looking for you to give you some food I have for you. I knew you were hungry. Let's go," said the hare.

The hare pulled the tiger by the foreleg as if she was glad to meet him.

At the hare's news the tiger pricked up his ears and asked, "What sort of food?"

"Sparrow meat which you would not exchange even for beef. You cannot compare the white stork's eggs with it. I will give you as much tasty sparrow meat as you like. Let's go." said the hare, urging him on by twitching his ears.

"Why didn't you bring the sparrow meat with you if you've got it?" said the tiger, looking with regret

at the hare, his appetite whetted.

"What a thing to say! Mr. tiger, I could not carry enough to satisfy you. You must come and eat as much as you can. Follow me."

The hare hopped away, leading the way.

The old tiger, delighted, followed the hare.

The hare led the tiger to the woods which were overgrown with tall grass and said, "Sit down here and open your mouth. I will round up a flock of sparrows." "What? Haven't you done it yet?" said the tiger with a frown, having thought that the meat would already be prepared.

"Sparrow is tasty when eaten alive. Wait for a moment with your eyes closed."

"My eyes closed?"

"Yes. Then a flock of sparrows will fly with a whoosh into your mouth."

The tiger nodded and closed his eyes.

At once the hare slipped the flint from the tiger's pocket, struck sparks from it and set fire to the tall grass.

The tall grass, which had dried in the autumn breeze, instantly caught light, and the fire spread with a whoosh in the direction of the tiger.

He thought a flock of sparrows was approaching.

The foolish tiger waited with his mouth wide open and his eyes closed.

Only when his fur caught fire did he take fright and run for his life. The tiger, which had tried to capture others by means of fire, was finally burnt to death.

The news reached the ears of other tigers.

"We thought we were the strongest in the world, but the old tiger was burnt to death in a fire. We must beware of fire."

Ever since tigers have feared fire. So in the old days people are said to have travelled at night, carrying a light.



Lost Trial

Some farmers were flailing soy beans in the yard of the landlord's house when suddenly they heard a cry.

Farmer Toksoe thought his flail had hit something. Brushing aside the soy beans, he found a flattened chicken.

It had come to peck up soy beans while the farmers were taking a break, smoking their pipes.

The landlord, who was reclining on a mat spread on the verandah, shouted, frowning, "What are you looking at? You rascal, pay for that chicken right now."

"Old Man, why are you making such a fuss over such a trifle as a chicken, calling me names?" Toksoe retorted, offended.

"What? You good-for-nothing, what kind of chicken do you think it is? Be quick and pay for it."

"Curse you! How much do you want for it?"

"You must pay at least 15 *ryang*."

"What? 15 *ryang*?"

Toksoe and all the other farmers were astonished on hearing this.

"Look here, Old Man. Don't be so hard on me. I'm only an ignorant farmer. Where do they charge 15 *ryang* for a chicken?"

"What an impudent fellow you are! This chicken is worth more than that." In this way they quarrelled with each other.

"It's too much. Even if I killed a goose, you cannot charge me that much."

All the other farmers took the side of Toksoe. Though they farmed as tenants under the landlord, they could not stand his unreasonableness.

The landlord took Toksoe to the county magistrate to sue him.

"This fellow killed my chicken but won't pay for it. I have come to seek judgement."

The magistrate leered at Toksoe and asked him, "Is it true that you killed his chicken?"

"Certainly. I hit it and killed it with my flail," said Toksoe truthfully.

"Hm. So why won't you pay for it?"

"I'll pay a reasonable price for it, but he has asked 15 *ryang*. The price is too high."

"You're asking 15 *ryang*, Old Man? It seems too much," the magistrate said.

"Too much? Although it was a chicken, it would have become a hen. I want the price of a hen," the landlord insisted.

"The price of a large hen is two or three *ryang* at most, not 15 *ryang*, I think," said Toksoe, refusing to give in.

The landlord shouted, ready to grasp Toksoe by the throat, "You rascal! Shut up! That is the price of the hens of poor people like you, not of ours. Every day I

feed a pint of millet to my hens. My hens grow fast and in winter they weigh two or three times as much as yours. In fact, a price of 15 *ryang* is quite low."

Nodding, the magistrate said, "Old Man, you are right. You! Be quick and pay 15 *ryang*."

"Clearly, the magistrate favours the nobility, as like attracts like," the farmers present at the scene murmured.

"Then I will pay 15 *ryang*," said Toksoe, having defied them so far, and paid it, taking the sum out of his pocket.

"Oh my! He should have stood up to them."

"It's because people submit to them like that that they look down on us peasants," the farmers murmured, disappointed with the outcome of the affair.

"You impudent fools, how dare you complain?" said the landlord, as he slipped the money into his pocket. But then Toksoe said in a sonorous voice, "Magistrate, I have a word to say."

"What is it?" The magistrate, who was on the point of leaving, sat down again.

"I killed a chicken, but had to pay 15 *ryang* for it, the price of a hen. The landlord said that he feeds a pint of millet a day to each of his chickens. How much millet do you think a chicken must eat to become a hen? At a conservative estimate, it must eat two *mal* of millet. To whom should the two *mal* (One *mal* equals about 3.97 gallon—Tr.) of millet of the landlord belong? It ought to belong to me. As one *mal* is worth 15 *ryang*, I ought to be paid 30 *ryang*."

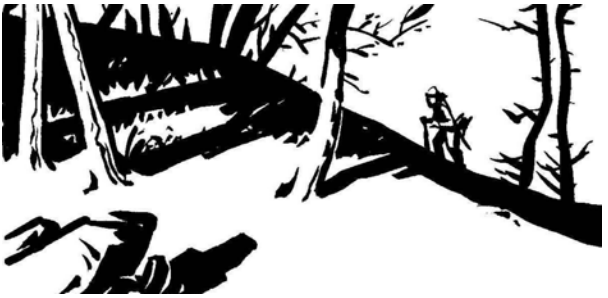
His words surprised the magistrate, and the landlord went red in the face. The magistrate said, "You are right. You! Pay 30 *ryang* right away."

The farmers at the scene raised a cry of joy.

So the landlord was hoist with his own petard, having tried to exact a large sum of money from a farmer on unjustifiable grounds, but having to pay him even more.

"Ho ho ho!" laughed the farmers in delight before leaving.





The Young Man Who Dug Up a Golden Jar

Once upon a time there was a young man whose family was so poor that, even though he was over twenty years old, he had still not married.

He was ashamed because he had to wear his hair in long plaits, and envied younger men with topknots.

He wanted to make a pretty girl his wife as soon as possible.

How can I get money for marriage? he wondered.

With this thought he went to a hill to gather firewood.

He earned only a few pennies, even though he spent the whole day gathering firewood.

One day on his way back after selling his firewood he counted the money he had earned.

He found that he did not have enough money to buy a dress for a bride.

Dispirited, he lay on the grass to think.

He thought of searching through the dirt at a gold mine and selling any gold he found.

The young man fell asleep.

In his dream a white-haired old man appeared before him.

The old man said to the young man:

"You seem to be suffering because you have nothing to offer a bride. I will show you the way. Go a little way up the deep valley yonder. You will come to a mound. Dig into it and you will find a golden jar. Take three pieces of gold out of the jar and bury it again."

With these words the old man disappeared.

The young man awoke from his dream and went up the valley as he had been told. He walked alongside a murmuring stream and came to a mound.

He began to dig with his pick. After a while his pick hit something which emitted brilliant rays.

He had hit a shining golden jar.

He hastily opened the jar and looked into it.

The jar contained many pieces of gold.

He took three pieces of gold from the jar.

But, he felt a certain emptiness and could not turn away.

Again the young man looked into the jar. It still contained many gold pieces.

He began to waver.

Three pieces of gold was more than enough to attract a bride, but he wanted one more piece.

Prompted by greed, he took another piece of gold from the jar.

Now with four pieces of gold in his hands, he wanted one more.

Now that I have found them, one or two pieces more will not count for much, he thought.

He looked around but there was nobody in sight.

He took one more piece of gold.

Suddenly lightning flashed and thunder rolled, as if the sky was falling.

Frightened, the young man fell to the ground.

Rain poured down and the wind raged. A muddy stream poured down the valley.

The young man scrambled up the hill, only just avoiding death. In the confusion he lost the pieces of gold.

After the rain he walked back down the valley.

He could not see the mound or find the place where he had dug up the golden jar.

Dejected, the young man sat down on the ground.

I was too greedy and lost all my treasure, he lamented.

But it was too late.

He felt his A-frame carrier on his back. It was still there. It was a blessing that he had not lost his A-frame carrier, he thought. But he could no longer expect a godsend, and he worked hard to set up his own home.





Hungbu and Nolbu

1

Once upon a time two brothers called Hungbu and Nolbu lived in a remote village.

Although they were blood brothers, their characters were different.

The younger brother, Hungbu, was honest, while the elder brother Nolbu was greedy and ill-natured and spoken about by many in the village.

Their father said to them on his deathbed, "You should help each other as brothers and live harmoniously together at home."

After his father's death the elder brother ignored what his father had said and began to treat his younger brother like a farmhand.

In the morning the elder brother shouted to his younger brother to sweep the yard and made him do hard and difficult jobs. At mealtimes the elder brother and his family ate boiled rice and meat soup, while his younger brother and his family ate thin gruel mixed with vegetables.

"Mommy, I should like to eat rice as well," said the youngest daughter of Hungbu one day, after recovering from a cold, pushing aside her bowl of gruel.

Hearing this, Nolbu who was eating rice at a separate table became angry and shouted:

"You good-for-nothings have bred like rabbits and your behaviour is a disgrace. Pack your bags and get out."

Nolbu went on to say that he could not enjoy his meals because of the children and had decided to turn Hungbu's family out of doors.

"Elder Brother, where do you suggest we go in this cold winter? I will tell my children not to complain about the food. Please let my family remain at home," Hungbu entreated him.

But Nolbu shouted, spluttering, "You rascal, how long do you intend to live off me? Get out at once."

With that, heartless Nolbu drove Hungbu's family out of doors.

It was a cold winter day and the mountains and fields were covered with snow and the biting wind hissed and raged.

Hungbu was shocked at having to leave the house with his family of eight on such cold day.

"Let me leave at the end of winter when the cold had passed," Hungbu again entreated his brother.

"I won't change my mind," Nolbu flatly refused and turned them out. As he wanted to keep for himself all the property left by his father, he gave nothing to his younger brother as he left.

All Hungbu took with him was bottomless pots and vessels with broken rims.

Hungbu did not know where to go.

They would be frozen solid in the cold wind.

The children cried as they walked, their feet being cold, while the baby on her mother's back cried from hunger.

"Don't cry. We'll build a tile-roofed house and live well," said Hungbu to soothe his crying children.

He could not find a suitable place to build a house.

After much thought Hungbu set down their household goods on a sunny place facing south. There he built a hut with tree branches and stones.

After three days the hut was finished and smoke began to rise leisurely from the chimney.

Hungbu was happy that it was his own home and the faces of his children were covered with smiles.

Now they had a shabby hut, yet they were hungry. Hungbu's family stayed alive by digging up rotten potatoes and acorns from the frozen soil.

2

The cold December was passing and New Year's Day was approaching.

On New Year's Eve Nolbu's family made rice cakes and killed a pig, while Hungbu's family were in trouble, with nothing to eat.

"The children must not go hungry on New Year's Day. Go and call on your elder brother over the hill. They must be short of hands. Help them to make rice cakes and other things and get something in return. After all, he is your brother and I'm sure he will not refuse to help us," Hungbu's wife said to her husband after a great deal of thought.

"Yes, I'll call on my elder brother and help make rice cakes." With these words honest Hungbu left his house.

At the top of the pass he saw a plume of smoke rising from the chimney of Nolbu's house.

He could hear the pounding of rice and the squeals of a pig being killed.

He saw his brother Nolbu scolding a servant through the open window.

"How are you, Brother?" Hungbu greeted him, his head lowered, as he reached the gate.

"Who are you?" said Nolbu coldly, looking at him as if he were a stranger.

"Brother, don't you recognize me? I'm your younger brother Hungbu," Hungbu said, hiding his sadness.

"Hungbu has nothing to do with me," said Nolbu, driving him out like a beggar.

Hungbu was shocked to hear this and could not say a word.

But then he thought of his family going hungry on New Year's Day, and could not remain silent.

"You may not remember me, but I remember you. From olden times brothers have always helped each other at difficult times. I came to help you to pound rice."

"If you wanted to help me, you should have come earlier, before I called in helping hands. Why have you come so late?" said Nolbu, pleased to hear that he would help him, and handed him a mallet.

Hungbu pounded three *mal* of boiled rice alone all day long, sweating heavily.

After finishing, Hungbu said reluctantly, "Brother, tomorrow is New Year's Day, but my children will go

hungry. I'm sorry to trouble you, but if you were to lend me a pot of rice, my family could celebrate New Year's Day."

At this Nolbu shouted, "You rascal, are you asking for reward from your brother? You are the wickedest fellow in the world, with no sense of duty."

"No, I ask no reward. If you lend me a pot of rice, I'll return it in the autumn," said Hungbu reluctantly, thinking of his family who would be waiting for him.

"Then take this for food." With these words Nolbu gave him a handful of rice bran he had intended to feed to his pig.

A handful of rice bran for working all day—Hungbu was resentful but showed no sign of it.

On his way back across the pass he blew a little of the rice bran onto his palm to see if there were any grains of rice in it.

After the bran had blown away a few grains of rice remained on his palm.

On seeing grains of rice after such a long time, his eyes shone.

Then something strange happened.

As Hungbu gazed at the rice, a few grains hopped and became two, which, in turn, became four.

"Oh, the grains of rice are multiplying?" Hungbu shouted in joy.

The grains of rice which multiplied by hopping had soon become a handful.

Hungbu arrived home with the rice.

"Look, we've got a handful of rice. I pounded boiled rice for my brother and he gave me this," said Hungbu to his wife as he entered.

On the morning of New Year's Day Hungbu's family

pounded the rice in a mortar and made one rice cake.

They had to divide it into eight pieces.

Hungbu's wife began to cut it with a knife. Strangely enough, the pieces of rice cake hopped and multiplied, becoming two and then four, which, in their turn, became eight.

"Oh, a multiplying rice cake!" cried Hungbu's family, laughing for joy.

On hearing their laughter as he went to visit a neighbour to talk, Nolbu said to himself.

"I wonder what joy is making them laugh."

Nolbu was too perverse to put up with other people laughing.

He threw open the mat door of Hungbu's house.

"I'm glad to see you, Uncle. Please receive my New Year's Day greetings," said all Hungbu's children, standing up.

"Where did you get the rice to make rice cakes?" Nolbu asked.

Lowering his head, Hungbu told him that the rice and rice cakes had multiplied.

"So, since the rice I gave you multiplied, you must return ten *mal* of rice to me in the autumn," said Nolbu, and after making such a preposterous demand, he left the house.

3

The cold winter passed and warm spring arrived. Plants on hills and fields began to unfold their buds and the swallows, which had gone south for the winter, returned in pairs.

Hungbu's family went gathering wild vegetables on

the hills which were carpeted with fully-grown azaleas and apricot blossoms.

One day a pair of swallows came to Hungbu's house and flew around its roof.

"I wonder why they have come to our shabby house, and not the large, tile-roofed houses," said Hungbu after returning from the field. He was delighted to see that a pair of swallows had come to his house, and he attached a board to the eaves.

The swallows built a nest on the board and soon it was filled with eggs.

After a few days chicks hatched in the nest.

There were five young swallows in all.

Every day Hungbu's children kept guard in the yard to stop evil animals approaching the nest.

The young swallows grew up fast and were soon trying to fly like grown-up ones.

One morning sudden cry was heard from the nest.

Hungbu ran out of the house.

He was shocked to see a large serpent crawl up to the nest and eat a swallow.

"You wicked serpent!"

Hungbu picked up a club and beat the serpent with it mercilessly.

The serpent fell to the ground, dead.

Hungbu hurriedly looked into the nest. Four young swallows and the parents were missing, only one young swallow was left, shivering, lying on the ground.

"The wicked serpent has swallowed your mother and broken your leg."

Pitying it, Hungbu laid it in his hand. He put resin on the wound and bound its injured leg. The wound soon

healed under his kind care and the young swallow was able to fly up into the sky.

The day came for swallows to fly south across the sea in search of a warm land.

Hungbu's children were sorry that the young swallow was leaving, and they tied a small gauze ribbon on its head.

After circling round over Hungbu's yard, the young swallow joined its fellows and turned to the south.

In the distant land of swallows their king was waiting for them.

On their arrival the king heard their story and asked the young swallow, "Whose son are you and why are you alone?"

The young swallow said, weeping, "I was born in a nest under the eaves of Hungbu's house. I lost my family to a serpent, and only narrowly escaped myself."

Then the young swallow explained how Hungbu had taken care of him, after binding up his injured leg and applying medicine to it.

Nodding his head, the king said, "Is there really such an honest man in the world?"

"Yes. And Hungbu's family are very poor and can barely eke out a living." Having said this, the young swallow gave him a detailed account of how Hungbu's family was living.

"I see," said the king, and lapsed into silent thought. Then, opening his treasure box, he took out the seed of a gourd and said:

"Such an honest man shall not live a hard life. I will give you this seed of a gourd. Take it to him next spring."

"Thank you," said the young swallow, bowing to him and receiving the seed.

4

Time passed and spring came round.

The swallows began to return from the southern region to build their nests.

Among them was the young swallow, holding the gourd seed in its beak.

The swallow arrived at Hungbu's house and settled on the washing line.

"Good heavens! The swallow with a gauze ribbon has returned," cried Hungbu's children, running out to welcome the bird.

Hungbu and his wife who were tending the kitchen garden looked up and saw the swallow.

The swallow dropped the gourd seed before them.

"My dear! What a fine gourd seed!" said Hungbu, running to pick it up.

"Father, let us see it," said his children, gathering around, eager to see it.

"The swallow has brought us a valuable gourd seed. Let's not waste time looking at it. Let's dig the ground and plant it."

Having said this, Hungbu dug a hole near the hedge and carefully planted the gourd seed.

Gourd seed, gourd seed,
Grow fast and high
Bear gourds
As large as a jar.

This his children sang, as they covered the seed with earth and watered it.



Suddenly a bud sprouted from the soil, as if to answer their wish.

Leaves and a stalk had appeared before they knew it.

It grew so fast that they seemed to hear it growing.

Hungbu erected a support to help the plant to grow up to the roof.

The stalk grew up the support to the roof.

It put out fragrant white flowers which attracted all the bees and butterflies around.

Then the flowers fell to the ground and five big gourds appeared. His children pestered Hungbu, looking at the gourds and saying, "Father, let's pick one of them."

"No, they must be picked on harvest moon day."

With his children soothed, Hungbu waited for the gourds to harden.

Finally harvest moon day arrived.

Having no good food to eat on harvest moon day, Hungbu's family decided to boil and eat the flesh of the gourds.

Hungbu came out with a saw in his hand, and his children gathered the gourds from the roof.

"Let's cut one of them open. I wonder what we will find," said Hungbu. When they had opened the gourd in the yard, rice poured out and piled up.

"What a rich harvest of rice!" cried the children in joy. Hungbu prepared to cut open the second gourd, saying, "Let's cut this one open. What will we find?"

Money poured out of the second gourd.

"Good heavens! Now we will have no worries about money," cried the children, clapping their hands for joy.

"Let's open the third one. What will we find?" said

Hungbu, beginning to saw open the third gourd.

Smoke came out of it and there appeared a pretty fairy with a drum.

The fairy said, turning to the remaining two gourds and beating her drum, “Come out, you magic bottles.”

One of the two gourds rolled over and split into two. A red bottle rolled out of it.

The last gourd rolled over and broke into two. A blue bottle appeared.

“Why did you call me out?” asked the red and blue bottles in unison.

The fairy beat her drum in answer.

Carpenters carrying timber appeared from the red bottle and built a tile-roofed house for Hungbu.

It was a fine house with guest rooms and a gate.

Hungbu’s family were amazed.

Then silks of various colours flowed out of the mouth of the blue bottle.

“Goodness me! Now we will want for nothing,” cried Hungbu’s family, dancing for joy.

The fairy looked at them with pleasure, made a somersault and vanished like smoke.

5

The rumour spread far and wide that Hungbu’s family had gone from rags to riches in a day. The rumour reached the ears of greedy Nolbu.

“How has he become rich? He must have stolen something,” he said, unable to remain quiet because of envy.

Hastily he set out for Hungbu’s house.

He was astonished to see a fine tile-roofed house where a shabby hut had stood before.

"He could not have taken a whole house by force and brought it here," he murmured dubiously, shaking his head. Approaching the house, he shouted "Who's there?"

Hearing his voice, Hungbu's wife and children came out.

They were all wearing fine silk clothes.

"How are you?" they said.

Nolbu bowed deeply before them, not realizing that they were his younger brother's wife and children.

"Uncle, don't do that. Let's go inside," said Hungbu's eldest daughter Onnyon, welcoming him and taking him by the sleeve.

Hearing the familiar voice, he raised his head and looked around at them.

"What?" he said amazed, shaking his sleeve free in disgust.

"Let go of me. Where is your father?"

"Father has gone to the field we acquired recently," Onnyon said.

Nolbu looked around enviously and entered the house.

Entering the house with his shoes on, Nolbu slipped on the oil-papered floor and fell over.

"I see you have oiled the floor for me to slip and fall," said Nolbu, becoming angry and scratching the floor with his stick.

"Uncle, don't be angry. Please sit down here." With these words Onnyon brought a cushion and put it down before him.

"I will not sit on this cushion, its stolen," he said, snorting, and threw the cushion away.

This caused the window paper to be torn.



Just then Hungbu arrived back from the field.

"You have come to my home, Brother. I'm glad to meet you," said Hungbu, kneeling and bowing to him politely.

"You rascal, what did you steal to be living in such splendour? Tell me the truth," shouted Nolbu, leering at his younger brother.

"I didn't steal anything. All this came from a gourd seed brought by a swallow," said Hungbu truthfully, but Nolbu said, shaking his head, "Nonsense. How can a house come out of a gourd seed?"

"If you find it hard to believe me, look at those magic bottles. It was from them that we got the house and goods," said Hungbu, offended by being accused of theft, and, taking the red and blue bottles from the wall closet, he showed them to him.

He had never seen such handsome bottles before.

"Did all this really come out of these bottles?"

"Yes."

"Then these bottles are mine," said Nolbu, seizing them, and left.

Back home Nolbu produced the red bottle and shouted, "You bottle, build a fine large house for me instead of this small one."

At this, men with picks, adzes and axes trooped out of the bottle, pulled down his tile-roofed house and built a shabby hut instead, before vanishing into the bottle.

"What perverse fellows!" cried Nolbu in anger.

Then he produced the blue bottle and shouted the command, "You bottle, change all the clothes and bedclothes in my home into silks."

No sooner had he shouted this than flames poured out

of the bottle and burned all the clothes and bedclothes in the house, leaving rags piled in the corner.

"Oh, no! I'm ruined. You rascal, you deceived me," lamented Nolbu before, on an impulse, running to Hungbu's house.

"You rascal, do you have some grudge against me, your brother, to deceive me and be so mean to me?"

"I didn't mean anything. Brother, calm yourself and listen to me."

With this, Hungbu told the infuriated Nolbu the story of how he had bound the swallow's leg after it had been bitten by a serpent and how the bird brought the gourd seed.

After listening to Hungbu, Nolbu returned home without a word, as if he had made a decision.

6

The next spring a pair of swallows flew belatedly to Nolbu's house.

They built their nest under the eaves of Nolbu's roof and, later, their young ones hatched.

"It will be fine if only a snake comes. Be quick and come, be you a yellow snake or a black one," said Nolbu, sitting in the yard and waiting impatiently for a snake to appear.

For a long time he waited, but no snake or serpent came.

"You wicked snake, why don't you come and eat the swallows?" complained Nolbu impatiently.

The young swallows had grown fast and were ready to leave the nest, following their parents.

"But this will not do. I must find a snake in the field and bring it," said Nolbu, and went off to search the field, but could find no snake.

Dejected, he plumped down on the ground.

But then a viper crept by him.

The viper had a triangular-shaped head.

On seeing the viper Nolbu was overjoyed and got to his feet and stood in its way.

The viper tried to escape into a nearby thicket.

"Viper, you do not need to escape. I only want you to come to my home and break the leg of a swallow," said Nolbu, patting the viper on its head with his stick.

Enraged, the viper bit Nolbu's foot and disappeared.

"Ouch!" cried Nolbu, grasping his bitten foot and plumped to the ground. The wound began to swell.

He returned home limping. For three days he lay ill in bed. On the fourth day he rose from his sickbed.

"Can nothing other than a snake break a swallow's leg?" Nolbu murmured.

He decided to break the swallow's leg himself.

He set a ladder against the wall, climbed up to the eaves and took a young swallow from the nest.

Then he broke its leg as a snake would have done and said in a pitying voice, "What a shame! A wicked snake has broken your leg. How it must hurt!"

Then he bound up the swallow's broken leg.

The young swallow with the broken leg suffered all summer before flying belatedly to the land in the south, where he explained to the king why he had arrived late.

"Is there truly such a wicked man alive? Carry this gourd seed to him."

Saying this, the king gave the swallow a gourd seed.

The next spring the swallow visited Nolbu's house, carrying the gourd seed in its beak.

When he received the gourd seed, Nolbu danced for joy.

He planted the gourd seed near the hedge and waited for gourds to appear.

In due time gourds appeared on the roof of Nolbu's house. There were ten gourds in all.

When harvest moon day came Nolbu picked them all.

"Let's cut them open. Let there be gold, silver and other treasures inside," said Nolbu, beginning to cut open the first gourd.

But suddenly all ten gourds burst open at once with a bang and strong men with clubs appeared from them.

"You brute! You neglected your brother, so take this sound thrashing," they said and began to beat Nolbu mercilessly with their clubs.

"Oh, save me!" Nolbu begged, rubbing his hands together. After giving him a sound beating the strong men disappeared. Then muddy water poured out of the gourds and Nolbu's house and fields were washed away in a flood.

Nolbu lost everything in a day and was reduced to abject poverty.



A Green Leaf

The rain fell for several consecutive days and there was a terrible flood.

Streams flooded out of all the valleys and over the crops in the fields, and houses were washed away. The cries of drowning men and animals were heard constantly. A man was sailing on the overflowing river in a small boat. He was an honest old man. He was rescuing the drowning people and animals. Then he turned his small boat towards home, but he heard the cries of a child from somewhere.

He rescued the child, who was on the verge of death, and placed him in his boat.

Then he saw a deer drifting down the stream, so he rescued it and placed it, too, in the boat. Then he saw a snake floating down the river. Its body was injured and it could hardly swim.

It was a repulsive creature, but the honest old man rescued it, too, and rowed towards the shore.

When the boat reached the shore, the deer and snake went their own ways, leaving only the child with the old man.

"Child, go home," said the old man to the child, who was reluctant to leave him.

"Grandpa, I have nowhere to go. Please let me remain with you," the child entreated the old man.

The child had lost his parents in the flood, so the old man pitied him and took him to his home.

The boy was clever.

The lonely old man decided to adopt him as his own son.

"From now on you will be my son."

"Yes, I will," said the boy, delighted at being adopted.

From that day on the boy lived without any worries under the old man's loving care.

Several days later a deer visited the old man, who was weaving a mat in the yard. It turned out to be the deer he had rescued.

The deer went up to him, bit into his sleeve and pulled the old man away.

Why is the deer pulling me away? Is it asking me to save someone? With this thought the old man went with the deer.

The deer led him towards a hill. After crossing a pass, they came to a cave in the hillside.

The deer entered the cave first. The old man followed it. Inside he found a shining box. Opening it, he found that it was packed with gold and silver.

The old man took the treasure to his home. With it he bought land and built a fine tile-roofed house.

The old man had become rich thanks to the deer.

From then on the boy who had been rescued by the old man began to act like the child of a rich man.

More and more the boy spent his time playing. He began to mix with troublemakers, to gamble and to haunt bars.

"Listen. You should not be idle even if you are rich. If you only play, your mind will become dull," the old man would admonish the boy sincerely.

"Are you sorry because I have spent some money?" The boy would reply instead of listening to the old man. The boy even spread the lie among the villagers that the old man did not feed him properly and treated him as his farmhand.

When the villagers remarked that the old man should be repaid for his kindness, the boy said, "That's a lie. During the flood he stole goods."

The absurd rumour spread from mouth to mouth and reached the ears of the county magistrate.

The magistrate sent an official to fetch the old man.

"You rascal, I hear that you only pretended to rescue people during the flood, while really stealing goods. Is it true?" the magistrate asked him sternly.

"It's not true."

"What? So, how did you become so rich? Tell me the truth."

"To tell the truth, I brought gold and silver from a cave on a hill, as the deer I rescued told me to do," said the old man.

The magistrate did not believe him.

"You rascal, that's a ridiculous lie. Your boy has laid a charge against you. Have you any evidence to prove him wrong?"

The magistrate believed the boy, and threw the old man into prison.

The boy has laid a charge against me—the old man thought resentfully. There was no one to whom he could appeal, and he spent his days impatiently, sighing heavily.

A few days later the old man was lamenting, "How blinded he is by his love of money to repay his saviour with such unkindness!" and sighing with a heavy heart when he heard a rustle in the corner.

Looking towards the corner, he saw a snake sliding down the prison wall. It was the snake he had rescued during the flood.

The snake bit the foot of the old man and slid away.

The thought that the snake he had saved had bitten his foot saddened him.

"How annoying to have kindness repaid with unkindness!" said the old man, beating his chest in anger.

He shed bitter tears at the thought that there was no one on whom he could rely.

As he rubbed his wounded foot, he thought that the snakebite would kill him.

Then the snake reappeared, with a green leaf in its mouth.

The snake applied the leaf to the old man's wound, then vanished.

Strangely enough, no sooner did the leaf touch the wound than the pain stopped and the wound healed.

To think that the snake which bit my foot has applied medicine to the wound, thought the old man, nonplussed.

Then he heard a fuss outside.

"Help! The magistrate's wife has been bitten by a snake."

"Call a doctor quickly...."

A few days later the old man heard a grieving voice outside his cell.

"Every doctor who has come to see her has said he cannot heal the wound. What shall I do?" It was the voice of the magistrate.

"So, I must try and heal it," thought the old man, holding the leaf which the snake had given him in his hand. He called the warder and asked him to tell the magistrate that he knew a remedy for a snakebite.

The warder went to tell the magistrate what the old man had said, and the magistrate ordered him to fetch the old man.

The old man was released from prison and went straight to the magistrate's house.

The whole of his wife's body was swollen and she was on the verge of death.

The old man applied the green leaf to her wound.

Immediately, the venom which had poisoned her whole system was purged and the swelling began to be reduced.

She started breathing regularly and got out of bed.

"You're a genius, a remarkable doctor," said the grateful magistrate to the old man.

"But I'm not a doctor," said the old man and told him the whole story. Only then did the magistrate believe his story.

"Even such a trivial thing as a snake shows its gratitude. How can someone who was born as the son of a man betray a man who saved his life and even adopted him? Go and fetch the boy at once."

Thus the magistrate made his servants capture the ungrateful son and throw him into jail.

Then he praised the worthy old man and told him that he would grant him any wish, and that he should speak without hesitation.

"When I think that he betrayed his father, I find him hateful. But he was only mad about property. So I beg of you to show mercy and allow him an opportunity to reform," said the old man as he watched his son being thrown into jail.

The magistrate nodded.

"He is such kindhearted old man. Hey, you! Do you realize you are guilty of betraying your worthy father?" asked the magistrate, rebuking the son.

"I deserve death after the terrible things I did, obsessed with the idea of owning property. But, if I die, I won't be able to support my honest father. I'll serve him, emulating his kindheartedness," said the son, weeping profusely.

The magistrate set him free.

They say that the boy lost his obsession for property and attended the honest old man with devotion so that he led a happy life.



A Thief Loses His Finger

In olden times there lived a good-for-nothing who spent his time in idleness and refused to work. He was a thief who made a living by stealing things and selling them.

One evening, having gambled away all his money, he came out onto a road crowded with people coming and going, and looked around. A young man with a small mesh bag in his hand caught his attention. The young man was walking, holding his bag with great care; it seemed that there was something valuable in it.

"Why is he being so careful with it? What's in it?" wondered the thief, staring at the mesh bag. He decided that there must be some precious treasure in it. So, he began to follow the young man. The young man walked towards the river to catch a ferry. The thief, too, went to the river after the young man. The ferry was taking on board people going to the village on the other side of the river. The young man paid his fare to the boatman and

got on board, and the thief followed him, pretending that he was going to the village.

The boat moved slowly through the gentle waves. The scenery on the riverside was dyed crimson in an evening glow and was quite beautiful. Wild ducks were swimming and sometimes dipping into the water to catch fish. The eyes of all the passengers were focussed on them, except for those of the young man who sat in the bow of the boat without glancing around.

The thief glanced stealthily at the mesh bag laid by the side of the young man. In the bag there was something covered with silk.

After a while the young man began to doze. The thief put his hand into the bag and tried to take out what was in it. But suddenly something bit his finger hard.

"Ouch!" cried the thief, in great pain.

The people near him looked round to see what had happened.

Flurried, he hastily pulled his hand out of the mesh bag. But a terrapin came out as well, attached to his hand. It was holding his finger tightly in its mouth, and would not let go.

"So, you were trying to steal my terrapin," said the young man, waking and seizing the thief by the collar. The thief began to beg for forgiveness. He knew that once a terrapin had bitten something it would not let go before its throat was cut.

"Young man, please cut your terrapin's throat. I'll pay for it," the thief begged him.

The young man was in a rage and scolded him: "What nonsense! I've travelled more than 120 km to get this terrapin to cure my mother's illness. Should I give up

the medicine to cure my mother's illness to reward you for your stealing? I will not."

"Then I'll pay double if you agree."

"I will refuse even if you offer to pay for it ten times," said the young man flatly.

The flurried thief continued to beg the young man, falling back on his age: "Young man, as you see I'm a youth, am I not? Is it right to cut off the finger of a man who has many years to live? Help me, please."

"Well, certainly you are younger than my mother. She is over eighty." "So, even if she recovers how long will she live? On the other hand, I can live for another 50 years at least. Forgive me, please."

At this thoughtless remark, the young man slapped him on the cheek, saying, "You rascal!" and scolded him: "Listen. You may have many years to live, many years to steal intead of working diligently. My mother is an honest old woman who has never stolen anything from anyone in her life. One day lived by my mother is more valuable than the 50 years which you will live dishonestly, stealing and refusing to work."

All the people on board nodded in agreement. The thief had nothing more to say. He ran away, having cut off his own finger to save his worthless life.





A Nobleman Counts Ducks

In one rural district there was a nobleman who was a fool and did not know it.

He raised ducks at his house, but did not know how many of them there were.

One day his farmhand lost one of the ducks to a weasel.

However, he thought that, because his master did not know how to count, he would not find out about it.

That evening the nobleman asked:

"Are all the ducks there?"

"Yes, they are all there, not a head is missing," replied the farmhand with a straight face.

The nobleman examined the pairs of ducks, but one duck did not have a partner.

Enraged, he thundered, wielding a club:

"Are you trying to trick me? What did you do with the duck? Find it at once."

The farmhand, who had known that the nobleman could not count, was taken aback. But he was not too worried.



The following day he killed and ate a duck. Then he went to the nobleman and said:

"Sir, I have found the duck and brought it. Count them again, please."

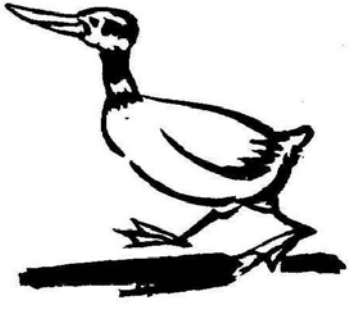
"Yes, I will."

The nobleman again examined the pairs of ducks. This time all of them had a partner.

Then he nodded, saying "Well, that's fine."

At this, the farmhand thought to himself:

"Truly he is a fool. If I eat two ducks every day, I will become fat during the three years of my service as a farmhand."





A True Friend

Once, a father and his son lived in a house. The father had few friends while his son had many.

The son had so many friends that they were always visiting him, several in a day.

"Is Jangsoe in?" With this they would call on him, be on the spree or gamble with him.

But, the father's friends were rarely to be seen.

"My father leads a dull life. I wonder how he can enjoy his life without company."

One day, with this on his mind, the son asked his father: "Don't you have any friends?"

"I have."

"If so, why don't they call on you?"

"Do you think that if someone is your friend, he must call on you? My friends are people I have got to know at work, so I can meet them at my workplace," replied the father.

His son shook his head, as if he could not understand what his father was saying.

"If one has friends, one should meet them frequently



and make merry. How can people you meet at work be true friends?"

The father, in his turn, shook his head as if disappointed with his son's remarks.

They decided to find out what made a true friend.

One day the father slaughtered one of his pigs and wrapped it in a mat.

"My son. Carry this on your shoulder," he said to his son.

The son did as was told.

It was a dark, moonless night.

The father went out of the house after his son.

"Boy, where are your friends' houses?" the father asked his son when they reached the entrance to the village.

"Friends of mine live in almost all the houses in this village," replied the son.

"If so, you must rush with this mat on your shoulder to the house of one of your friends and ask him to hide you."

"Why?"

"I want to know how much confidence you have in your friends," said the father, and his son nodded.

There was a light in the house of his closest friend.

The son burst into the house and said quickly:

"Hey, hide me."

"What's going on?" asked his friend, surprised to see the thing he carried on his shoulder.

"Can't you tell? Some people are chasing me. Hide me quickly."

"Hide you? What do you mean by stealing something and then rushing to my house?"

His friend would not hide him, but drove him out, thinking that hiding him might be dangerous.

The son headed for the next house, feeling displeased.

This was the house of a friend whom he had got to know while drinking.

The father cried "Stop thief!" and his son dashed into the house with the pig on his shoulder.

"Please hide this," the son said to his friend, panting.

"What is it?" asked his friend, his eyes open wide at the sight of the parcel.

"Can't you see what it is? It's pork. Some people are after me. Hide it quickly," urged the son.

"So, you must have stolen that pork. In my house there is nowhere to hide it. Go away quickly."

This friend, too, threw him out of his house to avoid a dangerous situation.

The son, having been rejected twice, proceeded to another house in blank dismay.

"I'll not be rejected this time."

With this thought he stopped in front of the third house.

It was the house of someone with whom he had made friends while gambling.

Again the father cried "Stop that man," and his son rushed into the house with the pork on his shoulder.

"Something terrible has happened. I beg you to help me," said the son, breathing hard.

"What's the matter?"

"I've been carrying this pork on my shoulder in the street, but some people are after me, calling me a thief," said the son in a fret.

"They must be calling you a thief because you've

stolen something. Don't hang around here. Leave at once."

This friend, too, rejected him for fear that helping him would invite disaster.

The son was aghast.

He visited several more houses but not one of his friends would help him.

"Normally they would claim that they would even give their flesh and bones for me, but not one of them was willing to help when I told them that I was in great danger."

The son, who had boasted of having many friends, was dispirited.

Then the father took the parcel from the shoulder of his son.

He walked to his friend's house, the house of Mr. O with whom he had become friendly while farming.

After his son had cried, "Stop thief!" he rushed into Mr. O's house.

"Mr. O, something terrible has happened. I beg you to hide this," he said hastily.

"What is it?"

"Can't you see? There are people after me, crying 'Stop thief!' Hide me quickly."

"I wonder how you've got into such trouble. Come in."

Unmindful of the talk of thief, Mr. O invited him into his house.

After a while, they began talking inside the house.

The son, who was waiting for his father to be driven out, listened.

"I'm afraid that it is dangerous for you to take a thief into your house."

“None of your jokes! I don’t believe that you have stolen anything.”

“Why don’t you think so?”

“Because you’re my friend. I believe in my friends, so I’m not taken in by any deception.”

The son heard this and felt a pang in his heart.

“Such a man is a true friend. Because he has such faith in my father, he has taken him into his house without hesitation.”

Then he felt ashamed for having regarded people whom he had got to know while drinking and gambling as his true friends.

The voices rang out from inside the house.

“Tomorrow is your birthday, I believe. Please accept this pork, though there is only a little, as an expression of true friendship,” said the father to Mr. O.

Then the son realized what a true friend is, and his head dropped.

After this he rid himself of the habit of finding friends in drinking and gambling and worked hard to make true friends.





An Upside-down Nose

It seems that one who dislikes work often becomes lost in thought.

Long ago, a boy called Bbaedoli lived in a village. One day he thought:

"So, is it impossible to live without working?"

Finally, he decided that he would make a great fuss to avoid any difficult work.

So, when his parents told him to go out to the fields to weed with them, he lay down and pretended to be ill with a stomachache.

His kindhearted parents took him at his word.

From then on he would deceive them artfully and always rest without doing anything.

He would sleep under a blanket as if he were really ill. However, this made it difficult to breathe.

"Why are my nostrils below my eyes? If they were to point upwards like a chimney, it would be easier to breathe."

He grumbled for a good while, until a good idea occurred to him.

He decided to call on the old man living in the outskirts of the village who granted the wishes of people.

Bbaedoli got up abruptly and went to him.

"Old man, I beg you to grant my wish," he badgered him.

"What wish?"

"Because my nostrils are below my eyes, I can breathe only with difficulty. Please, turn them upwards like a chimney."

"Ho, ho. Other people breathe freely. Only you have difficulty in breathing. Why is this?" asked the old man.

"It's because unlike others I am in the habit of sleeping with a blanket over my head."

"If that's the case, you should break the habit. You really shouldn't move your nostrils."

"No, old man. I cannot break my habit. Please, grant my wish," Bbaedoli implored him.

"Afterwards, won't you regret it?" asked the old man.

"Why should I regret it. I'll thank you for it."

Bbaedoli pleaded in such earnest that he complied with his request.

He lengthened his nose like a stick of toffee and placed it on his forehead with the nostrils pointing upwards.

"Thank you, old man," said Bbaedoli, heading cheerfully home.

After arriving home he again lay down and pulled the blanket over his head.

His upside-down nostrils had many advantages.

He could breathe better and had no fear that flies would creep over his face.

Moreover, underneath the blanket it was dark and so easier to sleep.

"People are so narrow-minded. They could never think of such a good idea," he said, becoming big-headed.

But his delight did not last long.

One day he was caught in a shower on his way to the upper village. It was raining torrentially.

Without an umbrella he became flurried.

He looked around but could see no house where he could take shelter from the rain.

He was soaked through and started to choke. The rain was running down his nostrils and choking him.

He breathed hard and sneezed. He had a fit of sneezing but could not stop the water running in.

Nonplussed, he picked up a leaf and covered his nostrils with it. But he snorted as soon as he put it on, and it flew away.

Helpless, Bbaedoli covered his nostrils with his hand and began breathing through his mouth. He opened his mouth, but rainwater ran into it.

He was dismayed and felt helpless.

After hesitating for a while he hit upon a splendid idea. It was to walk with his head lowered.

He lowered his head and went down on all fours like an animal. Breathing seemed to be easier. But, with his head hanging down he could not see in front of him.

As he crept forward he looked down. But first he hit the stump of a tree and then fell into a ditch. He became covered with mud so that it became difficult to tell whether he was a man or an animal.

Shamelessly he crept on. He bumped into someone coming in the other direction.

"Ouch!"

Bbaedoli looked up at him.

It was the old man who had granted his wish.

"Oh, it's you! I thought you were an animal creeping along."

The old man smiled wryly, apparently dumbfounded.

Bbaedoli could say nothing, and merely blinked.

This was natural because his wretched plight had been brought about by his own stubbornness.

"Well, I thought he would suffer. It was obvious that he would meet a mishap because he conceived only foolish ideas instead of living honestly."

The old man clicked his tongue and took Bbaedoli's hand to raise him to his feet.

Again, rainwater ran down Bbaedoli's nostrils.

"Old man, please set my nose right," pleaded Bbaedoli, clinging to his arm.

The old man plucked off Bbaedoli's nose and replaced it, pointing downwards. Then he asked him:

"You won't pester me to turn your nose upside down again, will you?"

"I'll never pester you again. From now on I'll live honestly," he promised.

"Fine. You can become a true man only when you are determined to live honestly," the old man said to him persuasively.

It is said that Bbaedoli bore his words deep in his mind and worked diligently and lived honestly, helping his parents.



Kim Chi Du and Ri Chi Du

Once, in a village, there lived a dealer in blue silk called Kim Chi Du and a dealer in red silk called Ri Chi Du.

The former lived in the upper part of the village and the latter lived in the lower part. They were both greedy and cunning. They would both offer bribes to the county magistrate to get into his good books. By doing so they could sell things at a high price under his patronage.

One day near the end of the year they decided to offer something to the magistrate but were reluctant to offer him expensive silk. Each debated with himself and each hit upon a good idea. Each decided to help himself to things belonging to the other.

When the sun went down and darkness fell, Kim Chi Du stealthily climbed over the wall of Ri Chi Du's house. He unlocked his warehouse and took a roll of red silk out of it. The next day he offered it to the magistrate.

That night, with the same wicked aim, Ri Chi Du went over the wall of Kim Chi Du's house, stole a roll of blue silk and presented it to the magistrate.

Their only thought was to steal the property of the other, and they did not realize that silk had been stolen from their own warehouses.

However the magistrate, who had received the silks as bribes, perceived their cunning scheme.

"Judging from the fact that the dealer in red silk has brought me blue silk and the dealer in blue silk has brought me red, it's obvious that there is some trickery."

With this the magistrate, who was no less cunning and wicked than the dealers, ordered his soldiers to arrest Kim Chi Du and bring him at once.

"I'm awaiting your command," said Kim Chi Du bowing to him, his heart in his mouth. But the magistrate shouted in disgust:

"You rascal! Confess what you have done."

All of a tremble, Kim Chi Du rubbed his hands together, begging that his life be spared.

"You swine. How dare you offer me stolen silk?" said the magistrate, rebuking him in a grave tone of voice.

Kim Chi Du, whose wicked scheme had been uncovered, merely trembled, at a loss what to do.

The magistrate shouted at him again, looking down at him.

"I'll do whatever you ask of me, only spare my life." Kim Chi Du implored, his eyes as big as those of a cow, as if he would be executed there and then.

"Give him fifty lashes and then put him in jail," said the magistrate and left.

Kim Chi Du received his fifty lashes and trembling, was dragged into jail.

The next day the magistrate summoned Ri Chi Du and ordered that he be given lashes and put him in prison.

Strangely enough, Kim Chi Du and Ri Chi Du shared a cell.

Because they had wronged each other they could not exchange looks, but sat back to back, breathing deeply.

Towards evening their wives came to the jail bringing their supper.

Kim Chi Du and Ri Chi Du whispered something into their wives' ears.

On the following morning their servants came to the magistrate's office driving horse-drawn carriages fully laden with bribes.

Unfortunately, an inspector who had come to the county on a hunting trip saw this.

"Come here," he said to the servants and asked them what was in the carriages.

They replied that their two masters had stolen each other's property to gain advantage, but that this had become known to the county magistrate and he had jailed them, and that they were offering further bribes to atone for their crimes.

Hearing them out, he said "Well," and stroked his beard.

"Listen. It's wrong to bribe the magistrate, who conducts the affairs of state, but he, in seizing the opportunity to take property from people, is also wrong. So these things should be offered to the state."

With this, the inspector ordered that the goods be taken to his own carriage.

Delighted at obtaining such wealth while on a hunting trip, he asked his servant:

"Can you tell what is in these loads?"

"Well, I think that, as they are bribes offered by

dealers, they must contain some rare objects."

"Ha, ha.... Then, let's hurry to an inn and examine them."

The inspector nodded in satisfaction more than once as he rode his horse.

The magistrate, having been deprived of his bribes by the inspector, felt very angry. He dragged out Kim Chi Du and Ri Chi Du and tortured them before sending them to their houses, urging them to bring more bribes.

They were overcome with fury. If they were to offer more bribes, they would have to spend all their business funds.

"How can I get back the property the inspector took away and offer it to the magistrate so as to do business again?"

After meditating for a good while, Kim Chi Du leapt to his feet and called on Ri Chi Du.

Already the sun was going down.

They were embarrassed to meet each other, kept straight faces.

They exchanged greetings and sat face to face.

Kim Chi Du opened his case, his shifty eyes slightly opened:

"Sir, we have given up all our property only to receive lashes. I can think of nothing I could resent more."

"Well, I agree," said Ri Chi Du, narrowing his wicked eyes, seemingly irritated.

"So, now that things have come to this, we should act quickly. Let's go tonight and take back our loads from the inspector. Then we should offer part of them to the magistrate and restart our businesses."

"Well, I would like to do so, but I'm afraid of the inspector."

"Oh, but you have no reason to fear. Whether he is an inspector or a king, there's no reason to be afraid."

"I see."

Ri Chi Du thought that, in his sad plight, it was worth a try.

"Well then, let's do as you say."

The magistrate, too, wanted to recover the things taken from him by the inspector.

After hearing that among the goods there were valuables such as silk, tiger's fur, *insam* (ginseng) and the antlers of young deer, he could not control his passion.

After a great deal of thought he called one of his servant, the one in whom he had the greatest confidence.

"Come on! Let's go and take back the things the inspector stole from me."

He nodded and offered the servant a purse of money.

The inspector, who had never dreamed of such good fortune, was drinking in the inn feeling happy at having unexpectedly obtained such wealth.

Suddenly, a man with his face covered with a white cloth burst into the room, a sword in his hand.

"Return everything you took!" he cried.

Taken aback, the inspector threw a wooden pillow at him.

"Ouch!"

It hit him in the face and his sword fell out of his hand.

The inspector promptly picked up the sword.

At that moment the door opened again and the magistrate came in, a sharp sword in his hand.

The magistrate and the inspector crossed swords. The inspector pierced the side of the magistrate and the magistrate stabbed the inspector in the breast. They writhed in agony and died.

Meanwhile, Kim Chi Du and Ri Chi Du arrived at the inn.

A dead silence reigned. They opened the door and entered the room, but there they found a great surprise. They found three men lying in blood.

However, they just looked round to find the valuables. They looked in every nook and cranny but found nothing but a parcel.

The cunning inspector had concealed the loads to provide against an emergency.

Kim Chi Du decided that there was no help for what had happened and that even the parcel should be his own.

He picked it up and ran like a rabbit out towards the hill. Ri Chi Du, who had been standing for a while with an alarmed look on his face, followed him. He wanted to snatch the parcel.

Seeing Ri Chi Du following him, Kim Chi Du stopped at the edge of a precipice. His scheme was to finish him off if given a chance. They duelled with each other on the brink of the precipice to get the parcel. Ri Chi Du sat astride Kim Chi Du, but he pushed him away for dear life.

They grappled with each other and fell over the high precipice.

They were engulfed in the torrents pouring through the valley below.

Next morning the servants of the inspector were informed of what had happened.

"Humph, thieves fought with thieves and none is left."

Dumbfounded, they tutted.

Realizing that if they were to return, they would be executed on the charge of having lost the inspector, they shared the valuables out and went their separate ways.





Two Scholars

Two scholars were walking along a mountain path.

The scholar on the right was wearing a *kat* (a Korean hat made of bamboo or horse-hair, formerly worn by married gentlemen) and his mouth was open, while the scholar on the left was carrying a bundle of rice cakes in his arms.

At the top of the mountain they took a rest together in a pavilion.

They sat face to face and exchanged names. Then they decided to have lunch, as they were hungry.

The scholar holding the bundle in his arms said to the scholar wearing the *kat*:

"The cakes we will have for lunch are in my bundle. My wife hung them on my breast so that I could eat them on my journey. But, because I don't like to take them out I cannot eat them. Please, get them out and put one in my mouth."

At this the scholar wearing the *kat* opened his eyes wide and remarked:

"What's the story? The string of my *kat* became loose at the foot of the mountain but I didn't want to tie it, so I'm keeping my mouth open so that it doesn't fall off."

The two scholars remained seated without eating. Where on earth are there more idle fellows than them?



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